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Early English Text Society.

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The Book  
of the  
Knight of La Tour-Landry,

Compiled for the Instruction of his Daughters;

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH INTO ENGLISH  
IN THE REIGN OF HENRY VI, AND EDITED FOR THE  
FIRST TIME FROM THE UNIQUE MANUSCRIPT  
IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, WITH AN  
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES.

BY

THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., M.R.S.L. &c. &c.

*Corresponding Member of the Imperial Institute of France  
(Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres).*

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MDCCCXVIII.

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The Book of the  
Knight of La Tour-Landry.

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# The Book

of the

## Knight of La Tour-Landry,

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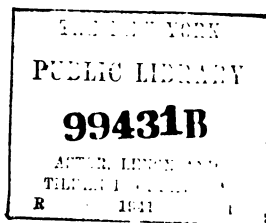
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MDCCLXVIII.

SSS  
La Tour-Landry



33

OXFORD:

BY T. COMBE, M.A., E. B. GARDNER, E. P. HALL, AND H. LATHAM, M.A.,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE feudal castle of La Tour-Landry, from which the author of the following book received his name, stood between Chollet and Vezins, in the part of the old province of Anjou which lay between Poitou and Britany, where its ruins are still visible, consisting of a great donjon, or keep, said to date from the twelfth century. The family of our Knight appears to have been established there at least as early as that date. In the year 1200, a Landry de la Tour, lord of this place, is found engaged in a lawsuit relating to lands; and the names of different members of the family are met with not unfrequently during the thirteenth century. M. de Montaignon, the editor of the original text of the Knight's "Book," who has investigated this question with laborious care, considers that the father of our author was Geoffroy de la Tour, spoken of at the beginning of the fourteenth century as lord of La Tour-Landry, Bourmont, La Galonière, Loroux-Botttereau, and Cornouaille, and who, under the banner of the Count of Anjou in 1336, distinguished himself by his courage in the war with the English.

This Geoffroy de la Tour had two sons, our Geoffroy, who was the eldest, and another named Arquade, who is supposed to have been



much younger than his brother. The latter, our Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry, appears from his own account to have been present at the siege of Aguilhon in 1346. His name again appears in a military muster in 1363. We know that he married Jeanne de Rougé, younger daughter of Bonabes de Rougé, lord of Erval, vicomte of La Guerche, and chamberlain to the king, but we are unacquainted with the date of this marriage, though in 1371 and 1372, when he composed the following book, he must have been married a sufficient length of time to have sons and daughters of an age to require instruction of this kind.

The name of Geoffroy de la Tour occurs several times between the date of the compilation of his book and the end of the century. In 1378 he sent his contribution of men to the army employed in the siege of Cherbourg, but he did not serve in person on that occasion. In the document recording this fact, he is described as a knight banneret. In 1380 Geoffroy served in the war in Brittany, and we find him again in active service in the September of the year 1383. We learn from another document, that at this last date Geoffroy's first wife, Jeanne de Rougé, was still living; but she must have died within a few years afterwards, for at a subsequent date, which M. de Montaiglon places in 1389, he contracted a second marriage with Marguerite des Roches, lady of La Mothe de Pendu, the widow of Jean de Clerembaut, knight. This is the latest mention of the name of our Knight which has yet been discovered among contemporary records; the date of his death is quite unknown, but it probably occurred at some period towards the end of the fourteenth century.

The descendants of Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry appear to have been all active in the turbulent times during which they lived, and through one of them the name became again rather curiously connected with literary history. The Knight of La Tour tells us that he had sons (in the plural); for at the beginning of the book now published he tells us in the original that he had compiled two

books, "*l'un pour mes filz, et l'autre pour mes filles*<sup>1</sup>;" and in two other passages of the present book, addressing his daughters, he refers to the book he had compiled for their brothers, "*ou livre de voz frères*<sup>2</sup>." Caxton, in his printed translation, has given us at the conclusion a little more precise information on the subject, when he makes the good Knight refer his daughters to the other book in the words, "as hit is reherced in the booke of my two sonnes<sup>3</sup>." The passage represented by these words of Caxton is not found in the known manuscripts of the French text; but we may be tolerably certain, from Caxton's known exactness, that it existed in the manuscript of which he made use, and we are justified in assuming that, at the time when Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry compiled this book, that is, in 1371, he had two sons. He has in no instance mentioned the number of his daughters, but the manuscripts of the original text are ornamented with illuminations, and in these the Knight is always represented as attended by three daughters, for which number the illuminators had no doubt satisfactory authority. Of the history of these daughters we know very little. One of them, Marie de la Tour-Landry, married, on the 1st of November, 1391, Gilles Clerembault, the son of her father's second wife by her former husband. Marie de la Tour left no issue, and died before 1400, as in that year Gilles Clerembault married a second wife.

This intermarriage of the two families appears to have been a favourite idea of Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry, and was perhaps

<sup>1</sup> "Et pour ce . . . ay-je fait deux livres, l'un pour mes filz, et l'autre pour mes filles pour aprendre à rommancier."—*Le Livre du Chevalier de la Tour*, edited by M. de Montaiglon, p. 4. "And therfor y haue made .ij. bokes, one for my sonnes, another for my doughtres, forto lerne hem to rede."—*The Book of the Knight*, English translation, p. 4 of the present volume.

<sup>2</sup> "Comme vous le trouverez plus à plain ou livre de vos frères."—*Le Livre du Chev. de la Tour*, chap. lxxxix. p. 175. "Si comme vous le trouverez ou livre que j'ai fait à voz frères." "As ye shal finde it more plainly in the boke of youre bretheren."—*The Book of the Knight*, chap. lxxxix. p. 115 of the present volume.

<sup>3</sup> See the present volume, p. 205.

a mere question of family interest. Charles de la Tour-Landry, who was Geoffroy's eldest son, was married first to Jeanne de Soudé, but this union appears not to have lasted long, for, after her death, Charles married in January, 1389, Jeanne Clerembault, the daughter of his step-mother, and sister of his brother-in-law. Charles de la Tour-Landry was slain at the battle of Azincourt, in October, 1415. There is some confusion in the family history at this time, through the imperfection of the genealogies; but a Geoffroy de la Tour, who was at the siege of Parthenay in 1419, and a Hervé de la Tour, who served in the wars near the same period (his name occurs in 1415 and 1416), are conjectured to have been sons of the author of our book. Charles de la Tour-Landry had five sons. The name of the eldest is uncertain, but he is said to have been with his father at Azincourt, and to have died of his wounds soon after the battle. As he died childless, his brother Pontus, the second son of Charles, remained the head of the family. The three other sons, Thibaud, Raoulet, and Louis, died without children. They had at least one sister, who formed a rather high matrimonial connection.

The family appears now to have been at its greatest height of prosperity and glory. Pontus de la Tour-Landry is cited as knight, lord of La Tour-Landry, of Bourmont, and of Loroux-Bottereau, and baron of Bouloir in the Vendomois; he appears in a record of the year 1424 as giving to the prior and convent of St. Jean of Anvers the tithe of grain in his estate of Cornouaille, and he seems to have held other considerable territories in Brittany and elsewhere. He was not unfrequently employed in public affairs, and was present at the battle of Formigrey in 1450. It is only necessary on the present occasion to say that Pontus had a daughter and a son, and that the latter, who was named Louis, had four sons, none of whom left issue; so that with them the male line of La Tour-Landry became extinct.

All the older great feudal families prided themselves on tracing their descent to the chieftains of the fabulous ages of society; and

usually each of them had his family romance, which told the story of the primeval heroes of his house, and which was no doubt frequently read by his clerk or chaunted by his minstrel for the edification of his family and his guests. These formed what were called the *Chansons* or *Romans de Geste*, which were so numerous in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the period when feudalism had reached its greatest development. As feudalism was gradually falling from its original character, the composition of such family romances went out of fashion, and we know of but a small number of instances at periods subsequent to those just mentioned. Thus, at a much later date, in the latter half of the fourteenth century, the family of Lusignan gratified its pride by employing a writer named Jean d'Arras to compile the romance of Melusine, according to which the lords of Lusignan derived their descent from the marriage of one of their great chiefs of early times with a fairy, named Melusine, who every Saturday took the form of a serpent. Pontus de la Tour-Landry was one of the very latest who imitated this example. Ambitious, probably, of rivalling the fame of the Lusignans, he appears to have employed some "clerk" like Jean d'Arras to compile the *Roman de Ponthus*, intending especially to glorify his own particular name. It is a romance of little merit, but appears to have been at one time rather popular, as it was often printed. Pontus is represented as having been the son of the king of Galicia and of his amours with the fair Sidonia, daughter of the king of Britany, where part of the ancestral possessions of the lords of La Tour lay. Most of the distinguished companions of Ponthus came from this side of France, and the first of them, and the one who figures most prominently, bears the significant name of Landry de la Tour. The scene is laid in Galicia, Britany, and England. It is curious now chiefly as forming an incident in the literary history of the Middle Ages.

Far differently interesting is the book which the great grandfather of the real Ponthus, our Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry,

compiled himself for the instruction of his daughters. Its interest is the greater from the care its author has taken to make us acquainted with the circumstances and feelings under which it was composed. The good Knight had, as already stated, three daughters, who had been left motherless, and for whose success in the world he naturally felt anxiety. He undertook, therefore, to write a treatise for the purpose of instructing them in all those mental qualities which, in the fourteenth century, were looked upon as constituting the character of a pure and perfect lady. His care to inform his readers in all the particulars relating to the origin of his book is, indeed, quite curious. He lets us know the date when he began it, and that at which it was ended. He says that the idea of it came into his head as he was indulging in somewhat melancholy pensiveness in his garden at the close of the month of April in the year 1371<sup>1</sup>; and we learn from two other incidental statements in the original text that it was completed in the year 1372. In the forty-ninth chapter he tells an anecdote which, he says, happened in the same year in which he was writing—*en cest an, qui est l'an mil trois cens lxxij*<sup>2</sup>; and in another passage he speaks of the battle of Crécy as having taken place twenty-six years ago—*il y a xxvj ans*; which, as that battle was fought on the 26th of August, 1346, would give us the same date of 1372. He further tells us in his introduction that he employed in compiling it two priests and two clerks<sup>3</sup>, whose work appears to have consisted in collecting illustrative examples and anecdotes from different writers. Every one acquainted with mediæval literature knows how general was this practice of teaching morals and religion through popular stories and short historical narratives. M. de Montaignon has further pointed out the fact that the author had commenced his book in the intention of following another

<sup>1</sup> See p. 1 of the present volume.

<sup>2</sup> P. 103 of M. de Montaignon's edition; it is omitted in the translation we here publish.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 3 of the present volume.

practice which was very popular in the literature of this period—that of composing books of instruction in verse. He has shown that in the original the prologue was written in verse, and that the rhythm, and even in great part the rhymes of this verse, are preserved almost perfectly in writing it as prose, until nearly the end of this prologue, when the Knight suddenly tells his readers that it is his design to write it, not in verse, but in prose, that he might be able to write less diffusely, and more simply and easier to be understood: “*que je ne veulx point mettre en rime, ainçois le veulx mettre en prose, pour l’abrégier et mieulx entendre,*” or, as our English translation expresses it, “but I wolde not sette it in ryme, but in prose, forto abregge it, and that it might be beter and more plainly to be understand<sup>1</sup>.” A very large proportion of the stories given by Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry are taken from the Scriptures and from the lives of saints and other similar productions; but, like other moralists of his age, he adopted the stories of the fabliaux, and the tales of the popular conteur, whenever they seemed to suit his purpose, and in his choice he has not rejected some which were better fitted by their want of delicacy to the ears of his contemporaries than to those of modern times. There then existed very little of refinement in word or thought, and, in the best society, both sexes often conversed in terms and on subjects which are in strange discordance with our modern sentiments.

No doubt under the pretext of instructing his own daughters, Geoffroy’s design was to write a treatise on the domestic education of women, and his plan appears to have extended still further, and to have been intended to embrace the other sex also. We learn positively from several passages in the present book, that he had already compiled a similar book for the use of his sons, and, from the way in which he speaks of it, the compilation of this other work must have preceded the book for the instruction of his daughters by some years. “And therefore,” he says at the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 3 of the present volume.

end of his prologue, "y have made .ij. bokes, one for my sones, another for my doughtres<sup>1</sup>." In another place, in warning his daughters against drunkenness, he says, "as ye shal finde it more plainly in the boke of youre bretheren<sup>2</sup>;" and again, at the close of the book, in Caxton's translation, the knight is made to say, "as hit is reherced in the booke of my two sonnes<sup>3</sup>." At least one other allusion to this book is found in the French text; yet, strange to say, nobody has ever heard of the existence of a copy of this treatise for the instruction of the Knight's sons, nor has any trace of it ever been discovered except in the mention of it in the book of which the translation is now published.

The book which Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry compiled for the instruction of his daughters, on the contrary, appears to have become extremely popular. Nearly a dozen copies of the original text are known to exist in manuscript, of which seven are in the Bibliothèque Imperial in Paris, and one in the Library of the British Museum. One or two of them date at least as far back as the beginning of the fifteenth century, and two are adorned with illuminations. In the year 1514, the first printed edition of the French text was published in Paris, by Guillaume Eustace, the king's printer. A second appeared no long time afterwards printed by the Veuve Jehan Trepperel, apparently copied from the edition of Guillaume Eustace. Both are very incorrect.

No other edition of the original text of this Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry was printed in French until it was included in 1854 by Jannet in the series so well known as the Bibliothèque Elzévirienne. This critical edition was produced under the care of one of the well-known scholars of the medieval literature of France, M. Anatole de Montaiglon, now secretary of the Ecole des Chartres. M. de Montaiglon has given us, in a very portable and convenient form, a good and correct text, formed chiefly upon the oldest of the manuscripts preserved in the Bibliothèque Im-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 5 of the present volume.      <sup>2</sup> See p. 115 of the present volume.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 205 of the present volume.

perial and upon the manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 19 CVIII), collated more or less with the others. It is accompanied with notes, and with a rather elaborate introduction, to which I gladly refer my readers.

The popularity of this book soon extended to foreign lands, and it was translated into several languages. The two earliest printed translations appeared in Germany and England very nearly at the same date. The German translation, made by a knight named Marquard vom Stein, was first printed in a folio volume at Bâle in 1493, under the title of *Der Ritter vom Turn, von den Exempuln der Gotsforcht vor Erberkeit* (The Knight of the Tour, of Examples of Piety and Honour). It forms a large and very handsome volume, with a great number of engravings on wood. The Book of the Knight of the Tower seems to have taken greatly in Germany, and it went through rather numerous editions between the date of this of Bâle and the middle of the sixteenth century. It has been reproduced much more recently, in fact so late as 1849, edited by Professor O. L. B. Wolff, as one of the volumes of popular romances published by the bookseller Otto Wigand of Leipzig. The first edition in English, as we are informed in the colophon at the end, was translated by our first printer William Caxton, and printed by him. He tells us himself, in this colophon, that the translation was finished on the first of June, 1483, and that the printing was completed on the last day of January, in the first year of the reign of King Richard III. As Richard III ascended the throne on the 26th of June, 1483; as the January in which the book was printed must have followed the June in which the translation was completed; and as we know that in the reckoning of this time the days from the 1st of January to the 25th of March were considered as belonging nominally to the former year and not to the year following, it means, of course, that Caxton's translation was printed and ready for publication on the 31st of January, 1484; so that the publication of the German translation had preceded



it. I enter into these particulars merely because it has been asserted that the date of the publication of Caxton's translation of the *Knight of the Tower* was January 1483, and not January 1484. It is a very singular circumstance that, although Caxton's translation of the *Book* appears to have been widely read in England in the sixteenth century, it was never reprinted.

There existed, however, an English translation of the *Book* of Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry long anterior to that of Caxton, though it was never printed. It is anonymous, and we have no means whatever of ascertaining the name of the author, or, in fact, anything whatever of its history. It is contained in a manuscript in the Harleian collection in the British Museum (MS. Harl. No. 1764), forming a large thin volume, in double columns, in a good formal writing of the reign of King Henry VI, so that it is not only part of a manuscript made for a person of some rank and importance, but of a volume which no doubt contained other treatises. This translation is in many respects superior to that of Caxton. The latter is so strictly and often so nakedly literal, that in following the words Caxton has sometimes lost the sense of the original, and this is carried to such a degree that it would be easy to identify the particular manuscript which Caxton followed if it were in existence. The anonymous translation of our manuscript, on the contrary, displays much more freedom, and is more correct. This earlier translation, moreover, furnishes a far more elegant and interesting monument of the English language in the fifteenth century. It is for these reasons that I have chosen it for the text of the present volume. Unfortunately, it is an imperfect manuscript, for there are one or two lacunæ in the body of the work, and it is truncated at the end by nearly one-fifth of the whole. Under these circumstances, the only resource was to supply from Caxton's text the parts which are wanting in the inedited manuscript.

In other respects, I have endeavoured to give as good an edition of the original manuscript as I could, and I have added a few

illustrative notes to such points as seemed to require explanation. In forming my text, I cannot but acknowledge with thanks the assistance I have received from the excellent transcript and collation made by William Rossiter, Esq., to whom also the reader owes the side-notes and head-lines.

THOMAS WRIGHT.

SYDNEY STREET, BROMPTON,  
*July 13, 1867.*



# The Book of the Knight

of

## La Cour-Landry.

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### PROLOGUE.

**I**N the yere of the incarnacion of oure lord M<sup>e</sup> iij<sup>e</sup> lxxj, as y was in a gardin, al heui and full<sup>e</sup> of thought, in the shadow, about the ende of the monthe of Aprille, but a litelle y reioysed me of the melodie and song of the wilde briddes; thei sang there in her langages, as the thrustille, the thrusshe, the nyting-gale, and other briddes, the whiche were full<sup>e</sup> of mirthe and ioye; and thaire suete songe made my herte to lighten, and made me to think of the tyme that is passed of my youthe, how loue in gret distresse had holde me, and how y was in her seruice mani tyme<sup>s</sup> full<sup>e</sup> of sorugh and gladnesse, as mani lovers ben. But my sorw was heled, and my seruice wel ysette and quitte, for he gaue [me a] fayr wyff, and that was bothe faire and good<sup>1</sup>, [who had knowleche of alle honoure, alle good, and of fayre mayntenynge,] and of all good she was bell and the floure; and y delited me so moche in her that y made for her loue songges, balades, rondelles, virolayes, and diuerse [other] thinges in the best wise that y couthe. But dethe, that on alle makithe werre, toke her from me, the whiche hathe made me haue mani a sorufulle

[Fol. 1,  
col. 1.]  
In April A.D.  
1371 I was in a  
garden, "and  
and full of  
thought,"

when the  
singing of the  
birds made  
me think of  
my youth, my  
love, and my  
marriage.

I made songes  
and ballads  
for my wife

till she died  
20 years ago,  
to my great  
sorrow.

<sup>1</sup> Part of the first column is scarcely legible, and I have been obliged to insert a few words from Caxton's translation.

thought and gret heuinesse. And so it is more than .xx. yeere that I haue ben for her ful of gret sorough. For a true lover is hert \*forgetith neuer the woman that enis he hathe truli loued.

\* [Fol. 1, col. 2.]  
When in the garden there came to me my three daughters, about whom I had great desire that they should "turn to good;"

And as y was in the saide gardein, thinkynge of these thought[s], y sawe come towardes me my .iij. daughters, of the whiche I was ioyfull, and had grete desire that thei shuld turne to good and worship aboute alle ertheli thinges, for thei were yonge and had but tendir witte; and so atte the begynnnyng a man aught to lerne his daughters with good ensaumples, yevinge as dede the quene Proues of Hongrie, that faire and goodly chastised and taught her daughters, as it [is] contened in her boke. And whanne my daughters come towardes me, I bethought me of the tyme whan that y yede and rode with my felawes in Paytov and other diuerse places thar y had ben

and I remembered how my "fellows" had behaved to women in the time of my youth,

in. And also y bethought and remembered me that my felawes comened with ladies and gentil women, the whiche praied hem of loue, for there was none of them thai might finde, lady or gentillwoman, but thei wolde praie her; and yef that one wolde not entende to that, other wolde anone praie. And whethir thei had good ansuere or euell, thei raught neuer, for thei had in hem no shame nor drede by the cause thei were so used. And therto thei had faire langage and wordes, for in eueri place thei wolde haue hadd her sportes and thei might. And so thei dede bothe deseiuue ladies and gentilwomen, and bere forthe diuerse langages on hem, som true and some fals, of the whiche there come to diuerse gret defames and sclaundres withoute cause and reson. And there is now this

from which had come much scandal,

\* [Fol. 1b. col. 1.]

day \*no gretter treson thanne a gentille woman to yeue her selff to a traitour fals churle, blamed with vices, for there ys mani of hem deceiued bi the foule and grete fals othes that the fals men vsen to swere to the women; for y haue herd my felawes suere ofte diuerse fals othes, and y asked hem whi thei forsuore hem saieng that thei loued euerich woman best that thei spake to. For y saide vnto hem, "Seris, ye shulde loue nor be aboute to haue but one." But wha[t] y saide vnto hem, it was neuer the beter. And therfor bi-cause y sawe atte

despite all my reproving.

... .

that tyme the gouernaunce of hem, the whiche y doutyd, that tyme yet regnithe, and ther be suche felawes now or worse, and therfor y purposed to make a litelle boke in the whiche y wolde write the good condicions and dedes of ladies and gentille women, that for her goodnesse were worshipped, honoured, praised, and renommed the tyme passed, and euer shal be, for her weldoinge and goodnes, to that entent that my doughtres shulde take ensauple of faire continuaunce and good manere. And also y wol make write the manere contrarie of goodnesse, the whiche is called the boke of hurtinge of euell women, that hathe vsed to do euell and had blames, to that entent that who so luste may kepe hem from harme ther thei might erre, as thei that yet be blamed, dishonoured, and shamed. & for these causes aforesaid, y thought to make this litelle boke to my yong doughtres, wherupon thei might rede and studie, to that entent that thei might lerne and see bothe good and \*euell of the tyme passed, and forto kepe hem in good clenness, and from alle euell in tyme comyng. For there be suche men that lyethe and makithe good visage and countenaunce to women afore hem, that scornithe and mockithe hem in her absence. And therfor it is harde to knowe the worlde that is now; and ther for the reson that y haue saide you, y parted and yede oute of the gardein, and fonde in my way .ij. prestes and .ij. clerkes that y had. And y said to hem that y wolde make a boke of ensauples, for to teche my doughtres, that thei might vnderstonde how thei shulde gouerne hem, and knowe good from euell. And so y made hem extraie me ensauples of the Bible and other bokes that y had, as the gestis of kinges, the croniclez of Fraunce, Grece, of Ingland, and of mani other straunge londes. And y made hem rede me eueri boke; and ther that y fonde a good ensauple, y made extraie it oute. And thanne y made this boke. But y wolde not sette it in ryme, but in prose, forto abregge it, and that it might be beter and more plainly to be understand. And y made this boke for the gret loue that y had to my said doughtres, the whiche y loued as fader aught to loue his child, hauing hertely ioye to finde wayes

And there be still men as bad, or worse. Therefore, for the guidance of my daughters, I proposed to make a little book about good and evil women,

that they  
\* [Fol. 1b.  
col. 2.]  
might know  
good and evil.

Going out of the garden, I met two priests and two clerkes, and I told them I would make a book of examples for my daughters, and bade them find me examples in the Bible and various histories,

from which I made this book, in prose, to be the better understood.

All parents  
should teach  
their chil-  
dren,  
\* [Fol. 2,  
col. 1.]

wherefore I  
made two  
books, one  
for my sons  
and the other  
for my  
daughters.

to stere and turne hem to goodnesse and worshippe, and to loue and serue her creatoure, and to haue loue of her neighbours and of the world. And therfor alle faders and moders after good nature aught to teche her children to leue alle wrong and euell waies, and shew hem the true right \*weye, as wele for the saluacion of the soule as for the worship of the worldely bodi. And therfor y haue made .ij. bokes, one for my sones, an other for my doughtres, forto lerne hem to rede. And in reding, it may not be but that thei shalle kepe with hem som good ensauple forto flee euell and withholde the good. For it shall not be posible but sumtyme thei shalle haue mynde on sum good ensauple, sum good doctrine of this boke, whanne thei knowe or here speke after as thei falle in the rewe vpon sum spekers of suche matiers.

## CHAPTER I.

The mirrour of  
the first read-  
ing.

It is a good  
thing for  
people to see  
themselves in  
the mirror of  
old stories.

I have great  
desire that ye  
turn your  
hearts to God.

\* [Fol. 2,  
col. 2.]

### The mirrour of the furst reding of these histories.

**H**It is a noble and a faire thinge for a man or a woman to see and beholde hem self in the mirrour of auncient stories, the whiche hathe ben wretin bi oure aunsetters forto shewe us good ensauples that thei dede to leue and to eschewe the euell. And, doughtres, y saie this for y am olde, and haue leued longe, and see moche more of the world thanne ye. And therfor aparti, after my science whiche is not<sup>1</sup> gret, y wille shew you, for y haue gret desire that ye turne youre hertis and thoughtis to drede and to serue God ; for he thanne wol sende you good and worship in this world, and in the other. For in certayne alle the verray good and worship honest of man and woman comithe of hym only, and of none other, and yeuith longe lyff and stont in this terreyn and wordly thing like as hym lust, for alle liethe in his plesir and ordinaunce. And also \*he yeuith and yeldith for the good service that is yeue and do to hym the double an hundred tymes. And therfor, doughtres, it is good to serue suche a lorde that gardonethe his seruauant in suche wise.

<sup>1</sup> ' whiche is not ' is repeated, by mistake, in the MS.

## CHAPTER II.

**A**Nd, therfor, the furst werke or laboure that a man or a woman shulde beginne, is to serue God ; atte eueri tyme he awakithe he ought to yeue God reconisaunce, bi thought or praier, that he is his lorde, creatour, and maker. And whanne he arisithe, to saie his matenis, or oresones, yef he be a clerk, yelding hym thankenges and preisyngges, as to saie *Laudate dominum omnes gentes, &c. ; Benedicamus patrem & filium* ; and to saie praiers and thingges that is praising and thanking to God. For it is an higher and more digne thinge forto praise and thanke God, thanne to requere hym, for in request askes yefte, mede, or guerdon ; and praising and thanking is seruice of aungeles, that euer praisithe and worshipithe God ; and it is beter to thanke God thanne to requere hym, for he wote beter what nedithe man or woman thanne hem selff. After, ye aught to praie God for the soules that ben dede, eueri day or ye slepe ; for yef ye do, the dede praiethe for you. And foryete not to praie to the blessed virgine Marie, that day and night praieth for us, and to recomaunde you to the seintes and santas. And whanne this is done, thanne ye may slepe the beter. And also y[e] ought to praie eueri tyme that ye wake ; and ye aught not foryete it that tyme. Also praie for the dede, of the whiche y wille telle you an exsaumple, how it \*is good to thanke God, and to praie for all cristen soules that ben dede, atte all tymes that ye wake.

A man's first work should be to serve God,

and to pray, for

it is better to thank God than to seek things from him.

Also pray every time ye wake.

\* [Fol 2b. col 1.]

## CHAPTER III.

**H**It is contened in the stori of Constantinenoble, ther was an emperoure hadde .ij. doughters, and the yonggest had good condicones, for she loued wel God, and praied hym atte alle tymes that she awaked for the dede. And as she and her suster laie a bedde, her suster awoke, and herde her in her praieres, and scorned and mocked her, and saide, "hold youre pees, for y may not slepe-for you." And so it happed

An emperor had two daughters,

and the youngest kept the eldest awake by her prayers.



And two  
knights came  
to lie with  
them ;  
and the one  
who came to  
the youngest,  
saw a thou-  
sand dead  
bodies, and  
ran away,

but the other  
begat the  
elder sister  
with child,

and her father  
put him and  
her to death ;  
but the  
youngest  
sister was  
saved,  
\*[Fol. 2b.  
col. 2.]

and married  
a king of  
Greece.

that youthe constreyned hem bothe to loue .ij. bretheren, that were knightes, and were goodly men. And so the susteres tolde her counsaile eche to other. And aite the laste thei sette steuen that the knightes shulde come to lye bi hem bi night priuely atte sertaine owre. And that one came to the yongest suster, but hym thought he sawe a thousand dede bodies about her in shetis ; and he was so sore afraied and aferde, that he ranne awaie as he had be oute of hym selff, and caute the feuers and gret sikenesse thorough the fere that he had, and laied hym in his bedde, and might not stere for siknesse. But that other knight come into that other suster withoute letting, and begate her with childe. And whanne her fader wost she was with childe, he made cast her in to the riuer, and drenche her and her childe, and made to scorche the knight quicke. Thus, for that delyt, thei were bothe dede, but that other suster was saued. And y shalle telle you on the morw it was in alle the hous how \*that one knight was sike in his bedde, and the yongest suster yede to see hym, and asked hym wherof he was sike. "As y wende to haue entered betwene the curteynes of youre bedde, y sawe so gret nombre of dede men that y was nigh wode for fere, and yet y am aferde & afraied of the sight." And whanne she herde that, she thanked God humbly that had kept her from shame and distruccion ; and from that forwarde she worshipped and praied God devoutly atte alle tymes that she awaked, and al wey [kept] her self clene and chaste. And not long after a kinge of Grece wedded her, and was continued a good woman and a deuoute, and had a good name, and thus was she saued, as ye haue herde, forto worshippe and prae to God for the dede. And her eldest suster, that mocked her, was dede and disworshipped, as ye haue herde. And therfor, doughters, bethenke you on this exsauple whan ye wake, and slepe not till ye haue praied for the dede, as dede the yongest doughter. Yet y wolde ye knew an exauple how a lorde<sup>1</sup> wolde haue a gentille woman, bi faire or be force, for to do his foule lust with her.

<sup>1</sup> 'how a lorde' is repeated, by mistake, in the MS.

## CHAPTER IV.

Of the knight that folued the gentille woman into the busshe.

**H**It happed that the lorde made spie how the gentille woman was gone to hide her in a busshe for fere of hym ; and there she saide dirige for alle cristen sowles. And he come thedir forto fulfelle his foule delit, and wende forto haue touched her, hym thought he sawe more than x M<sup>le</sup> dede folk about her, and kepte her, \*and therfor he ranne awaye. And he sende to her and sware to her that he wolde neuer requere her of no suche materes, for she had to kepe her a ferdfulle companie. And she saide, "y had none with me, saue atte that tyme y saide dirige for alle cristen sowles." But she thought that thei were tho that kepte her. And therfor it is good to prairie for the dede atte all owres.

Of a knight who would have a gentille woman by force, and followed her, but she prayed for all Christian souls,

and he saw ten thousand \* [Fol. 3, col. 1.] dead bodies, and ran away ;

therefore it is good to pray for the dead.

## CHAPTER V.

**F**Aire doughtres, whanne ye arise, enterithe into the highe service of the highe lord Ihesu, and saithe youre matenis and youre service with good herte, and thenke not on none other worldly ocupaciones in that tyme as ferforthe as ye may, for ye may not goe two waies atte onis ; as the wise man saithe, "as good is he that herithe and understandithe not, as he that huntithe and takithe not." And therfor he that saithe a pater noster and praiers, and thinkithe of worldely thinges and ocupaciones, his praiers profitethe not ; for praiers ben celestiall thinges, and holy writte saithe "beter were a shorte orison, saide with good deuoute herte, thanne gret long matenis, saide withoute deuocion and thinke on worldli ocupaciones." But the more ye saie deuoutly and with good hert, the more merite ye haue. And, as holi writte makithe mencion, "like as the dewe of Aprille temperithe the erthe and makithe it fructife, so praiers to God makithe man and woman to be enhaunsed ;" as ye may see in holy legendis of seintes, confessours, uirgines,

When you rise, say your matins, and think not on worldly things ;

for "as good is he that heareth and understandeth not, as he that hunteth and taketh not."

Prayers to God are like the dew of April,

\* [Fol. 3,  
col. 2.]

therefore say  
your prayers  
thinking only  
of God,

and hear  
masses,

and holy women that made her bedes of cutting of vynes and other thingges, that shulde cause hem the lasse to \*slepe and to haue rest, to that entent that thei might prairie and entre in orisones, and in good seruice, the whiche thei were in day and night. And for her laboure thei wanne hem heuene; and God hathe and dothe shewe for hem gret miracles, and so he gardonithe his seruice an hundred tymes double. And therfor, good doughtres, saithe *your* matenis and praiers withoute thinking saue only of God, deuoutly and with good hert; and that ye saie hem fasting, for a fulle stomake may not be holy & perfittly humble and deuoute. And after, herithe alle the masses that ye may, for gret profit and good ye shulle haue therof of God, of the whiche y wolde telle you an exauple.

## CHAPTER VI.

of which I will  
tell you an  
exauple of a  
knight that  
had two  
daughters.  
The eldest  
always prayed  
fasting,

but the  
younger was  
wilful, and  
fond of eating.

She was  
wedded to a  
knight,

\* [Fol. 3b.  
col. 1.]

who tried by  
fair words to  
teach her  
better, but in  
vain;

There was a knight that had two doughtres, the eldest of his first wiff, and that other of the secounde. And she of the first wiff was wonder deuout, for she wolde neuer ete nor drinke till she had saide her matenis and her seruice, and herde alle the masses that she might here in the chirche that she was inne. And the yongger was so cherished that she dede what she wolde; and as sone as she had herde a litelle masse, and saide .ij. or .iiij. pater nosterz, she come into the wardrobe to ete browesse or sum other mete, and till she had broken her fast she saide her hede oke, but hit was but euel of custumance. And also she wold haue rere sopers whanne her fader and moder was a bedde. And thus she leued till she was weddid to a knight, wyse and malicious, that had knowlache of her maners, that were euell bothe for bodi and soule. And thanne the \*knight taught her, with goodly wordes and softe, that she dede euell to lede suche lyff. But it was neuer the beter for no teching nor faire wordes, for she wolde not be chastised. But it befelle on a tyme that her husbonde had slept his first slepe, and groped, and wende to haue his wyff bi him, but she was arisen and

gone ; but he was wrothe, and caste on hym a mantell furred with graie, and rose, and yode into a wardrobe that his wiff was in, and other women, and .ij. of his men synging and crienge, iaping, and plaieng, making suche noise that unnethe thei might haue herde the thundre. And one of the men helde his honde vnder one of the wommanes clothes ; and that sawe the goodman, that hadde a staffe in his hande, and smote that man on the shuldre, and the staf brake that was drie ; and the pece and the splinter therof lepte, and smote oute the ladies eye, thorughe whiche misauenture the lady was one-yed. And for that foule mayme her husbonde kiste away his herte from his wyff, and loued an other, in suche wise that euer after the housholde yede to not. And this behapped her for the misgouernaunce abouesaid, to ete and make suche reuelle out of tyme bothe bi the morw and atte night, for the whiche she lost her eye, and her husbondes loue, and the housholde stroied ; and therfor it is good to saie matenis and here masse fasting, for usage makithe custume, for, "sette a colte in aumblyng ringes, he wille use it whiles thei aren on." But it happed other wise with her suster, for she acustomed her self of youthe to serue God devoutly in the \*chirche, and saie her matenis and here her masse fastinge ; and therfor God gerdonithe her, and gaue her a riche knight and a puissaunt, and [they] leued longe togederes worshipfully. And after it happed that the fader come to see his daughters, and atte the eldestys hous he was receiued worshipfulli, with gret richesse, ioye, and gladnesse, and atte the yongest doughtres hous it was turned up-so-doun, and alle unthrifiti, and she one-yed. And whanne the fader come home to his hous, he chidde his wiff, saieng that she had lost his daughter for leting her haue moche her wille, and to lete her goormaunde oute of tyme. And bi this exsauple it is good to serue God and here masse, whanne folke may, fastinge, and lyue tempered and moderat lyff, and ete and drinke atte oures in due tyme, as about prime, and sope atte oure couenable after the tyme of the yeere ; for suche lyff as ye wille contynue, use you to in youre youthe, ye shal be by youre flesshe constreined to kepe in youre age.

and one night he found her in a wardrobe with men and women, singing and playing ;

and he smote one of the men with a staff, which brake, and the splinter bliuded his wife. After which he took "his heart from her," and the household came to naught.

Therefore it is good to use yourself to saying prayers fasting, "for set a colt in amblyng rings, he will use it while they are on."

\* [Fol. 3b. col. 2.] But the elder sister married a rich knight, and lived long with him.

And their father blamed his wife for letting the youngest daughter have her own way.

## CHAPTER VII.

**How the maydenes and women shuldin faste.**

How maidens  
and women  
should fast

three days a  
week,

or at least on  
Fridays.

\* [Fol. 4,  
col. 1.]  
For a Chris-  
tian man had  
his head cut  
off, and still  
lived long  
enough to be  
shriven ;

for through  
his fasting  
God had  
mercy on  
him.

An example  
not to eat  
meat on Wed-  
nesday or any  
food on Fri-  
day.

**A**fter, my faire doughtres, ye aught to fast, as long as ye be to wedde, .iij. dayes a woke, forto holde lowe youre flesshe, to kepe you chaste and clene, in Goddes seruice. And yef ye may not fast somoche, fast the Friday in the worship of Cristes passion that he suffered for us ; and yef ye fast not brede and water, etithe no thing that receiued dethe, for that is a noble thing ; as y haue herde a knight telle that yede into bataile ayenst Sarizenes, for it happed a cristen man ys hede \*was smiten of, and [he] deied not till a prest come to shriue hym ; and the prest asked how he might speke withoute the body ; and the hede saide, " I haue forborn flesshe on the Wednisday in the reuerens that God was solde that day, and that y ete neuer no thing that suffered dethe on the Friday ; therfor God wolde not that he that seruith hym deye in dedly synne withoute confession, nor to be dampned. Here is a faire ensauple to forbere flesshe on the Wednisday, and ete no thing on the Friday that suffered dethe. And after, doughters, it is good to fast the Saterdag for the loue of oure ladi, and in the reuerence of her virginite, to praie her to kepe you in clenness, chastite, and in loue of youre frendes, in good name, and oute of temptacion. And that fast is to make you haue victori ayenst youre flesshe ; and in sothe yef ye lust to acustume you here to, ye may wel endure these fastes, for hit shall not greue you with vsage, bothe saieng youre seruice, hering youre masse fasting, and to do other blessed dedes, as the saintes dede, and as her legendes maken mencion, the whiche are now in paradise.

## CHAPTER VIII.

An example  
of an evil  
woman who  
fasted,

**I**wolde that ye had the ensauple of an euell woman that fasted the Fryday and Saterdag in the worship of Cristes passion and the virginite of oure lady, and alle way that woman wolde kepe her self clene thilke two dayes.

who when she  
fell into a  
well,

**H**It happed her on a derke night, as she yede towards her lemman to foly, she felle into a well that was twenty

fadom depe, and in her fallyng cried helpe on oure lady ; and whanne she come to the \*water, she fonde it harde underne the her fete, and a uoys come to her saieng, "thou hast in the worship of oure lady, kepte thin flesshe clene in her fast, and therfor now thou shalt be saued of this perile." And so, on the morw, folke come to feche and wynde up water at that welle, and thei herde and sawe her therinne, and thanne thei drowe her up, hauyng moche meruaile how she might be saued ; and she saide it was for loue of her fast the Friday and the Saterdag. And thus, as ye haue herde, God and oure lady saued her. And than she avowed chastite, and to liue and vse her lyff in Goddes seruice, and to lyght lompes, torches, and other lyghtes in the chirche, and to suepe and to kepe clene the chirche. But ther come a uision to her in a night, that she drowe oute of a donghille a plater of siluer, and, as she loked thereon, there was diuerse blacke spottys therin, and there come a voys to her and saide, "score so longe on this plate till ye haue hadde away alle the blacke spottis, and make it white and clene, as whanne it come oute of the maistres honde that made hit." And this auision come to her .iij. tymes, and thanne she awoke, and bethought her on her auysion, and praied to God to ben her helpe. And whanne it was day she yede and shroue her to an holy man, and tolde hym her auysion. And whanne he hadde herde her [he] saide, "Doughter, ye are moche beholde to serue God, sethe he wol youre saluacion, and shew you how ye shalle wasshe and clense you from synne by confession. And y wille shewe you what youre auision signifiethe ; the plater \*drawen oute of the donge likenithe the soule in the bodi, and yef the bodi consented not to synne, the soule shulde be as white and as clene as the siluer whanne it come furst from the goldsmithes, for so clene is the soule whan he comithe from bapteme ; and the soule is the plater that was founde in the dongge, so is the bodi dongge, wormes, and felthe. And whanne the bodi hathe synned for his fals delitis, thanne comithe on the soule a blacke spotte for eueri synne. And there the spottis is, to the body that hathe done the synne be confessed, and repente hym of his synne in as foule

found the  
water  
\* [Fol. 4.  
col. 2.]  
made hard  
under her,

and was  
sawed.

Afterwards  
she had a  
vision,

repeated  
three times,

in which the  
soul is com-  
pared to a  
silver plate.

\* [Fol. 4b.  
col. 1.]  
As the plate  
is spotted by  
dirt, so the  
soul is spotted  
by sin.

manere as he dede the synne, and make satisfaccion ; and therfor, doghtres, the uoys of the auision bade that the plater shulde be made clene and white as it come from the goldsmithes, that is, as ye come clene from the font stone. After a bade that ye shulde put the saide plater in a place there hit might be kepte clene, and that it shulde be kepte from filthe, that is to saie, that ye go not into no place that wold drawe you toward synne, for good it is to be shriue, but after shrifte it is beter thinge to kepe a man from synne, and that ye falle not to synne ayen ; for falling in ayen is worse thanne the furst synne. And whanne a man is shreue, he shulde leue no thinge vntolde, and telle in what wise he haths done the synne, wherof, my faire doghtres, y wol telle you an exsauple of a mighti and a puissant woman.

The soul  
should be  
kept clean,  
like the plate.

## CHAPTER IX.

An example  
of a woman  
who fasted  
\* [Fol. 4b.  
col. 2.]  
and gave  
great alms,  
yet was lost  
for one sin,

Ther was a worthi burgoyze, a good woman, wel named and charitable, that fasted .iij. tymes a woke, two \*tymes in brede and water, and gaue gret almesses, and uisited the sike, and norisshed faderles children, and was atte the masses tille mydday, and saide her matenis, with gret and meruailous other seruise, and used the blessed lyf that any woman might. And hit happed that she deied, and oure lorde wolde shewe ensauple how she was lost and dampned for one dedly synne ; for in alle mennis sight her berieles began to smoke, and the erthe to brenne, and on night was gret torment herde on her pitte, of the whiche pepille was gretly amerueiled of what it might be ; before thei supposed euer that she was saued ouer alle other. And thedir come an holy man with the holy crosse, and coniured the sowle in the name of God to helle, and shew what stinke and what turment that was and brenninge. Thanne spake a uoys, and saide, “y am the poure synner, y am dampned in fyre, for God shewithe that my wreched body yeldithe smoke and turment in exsauple ; beware by me, for whanne y was yonge, for the lust of my flesshe, y laye with a monke ; & y durste neuer telle it to my confessour, for drede of encursinge,

which she did  
not confess  
for fear of  
shame.

dredinge shame and the bobaunce of the worlde, more thanne spirituel uengeance of myn synne. And yet y sende and gaue my good for Goddes sake, herde masses, and saide my seruice diligently, wenyng that the good and the abstinence that y dede shulde haue clensed the synne that y durst not telle the preest, and therein y am deseueid, and lost ; for y saie you alle, who that dothe a dedly synne and confessith hym not therof, \* and deieth, so he is dampned perpetuely ; and therfor ye shulde telle the synne as foule as ye do it, and in the same manere ;" and whanne she hadde saide, alle that herde her were abaissed, for there was none that wende but she had be saued. And this exsaumple the good man that shroue the woman in the nexst tale afore tolde her in her shrifte, to that entent that she shulde telle alle her synne, and so she shroue her and was sethe of holy lyff, and so she had awaye the spottys of the siluer plater. And so was she saued by her shrifte. And the beginnyng of her saluacion was the fast on the Friday and Saterday in worship of Cristes passion and the uirginite of oure lady, for the whiche she was furst saued from the perile of the well, for there nys no good dede but it be quitte. Therfor it is a blessed thinge to faste, for the more harme it dothe the faster, the more is the merit, and of gretter valour for ; and the fast greued not, hit were not merit. And yet forto shewe an other exsaumple that fastinge is gret meryt, the king of Nynbe and his citees were saued, as it is wretin in the Bible, for God had made many citees to sinke for the synne that thei delited hem inne. And so God sent worde to the kynge and the citee bi the profete Ionas, but yef thei amende hem, the citee and the peple shulde be perysshed. And thanne the peple were aferde, and forto apese the wrathe of God, alle thei that were of age to fast fasted fourty dayes and nightes, and knelyng on her kneys and elbowes in sygne of humilite. And whanne \*God sawe her humblesse, he had mercy on hem, and [they] were saued, and called out of pestelence by fastinge and humilite. And therfor, faire doughtres, fastinge is an abstinence of vertu, right couenable to swage the yre of God, and refrainithe the flesshe of euell willes,

\* [Fol. 5,  
col. 1.]

It is a blessed thing to fast, and the more harm it does to the body, the greater the merit.

The king of Nineveh and his cities were saved,

because the people fasted.

\* [Fol. 5,  
col. 2.]



and humblithe the herte, and impetret pardon and grace of God ; and therfor yong women aught to faste, and specially maydenes and wedwes, as is aforesaid by diuerse exsaamples, the whiche, and God before, ye shalle take hede of and kepe hem wella.

## CHAPTER X.

## How women shulde behaue hem curtesly and mekely.

- Meekness and courtesy are great virtues.

Goodly demeanour will bring a "ramageus" sparrow-hawk from a tree to your hand.

Humility is the beginning of friendship.

\* [Fol. 5b. col. 1.]

Courtesy to the great is their right, but to the poor is of humble heart,

**A**fter, doughtres, ye must be meke and curteys, for there nis none so gret a vertu to gete the grace of God and the loue of alle peple ; for humilite and curtesie ouercomithe alle proude hertys that be felle, as a sparhauke, be he neuer so ramageus, ye may ouercome hym with goodly and curteys demening, ye may make hym come from the tre to youre honde. And yef ye fare rudely and be cruelle with hym, he will fle his way and neuer come atte you. And sethe that curtesye and softenesse may ouercome a wilde bridde, that hathe no reson, nedes it aught to refraine felons proude herte of man and woman. And humilite is the furst entre and wey of frenship and wordely loue, and that ouercomithe gret hertis, and suagithe ire and wrathe of alle persones. Ther was a lorde that y knew, that conquered the knightes and squiers by his curtesie and humilite to do hem [more] plesaunce in the tyme of his werre, than other lordes couthe gete with her gold \*and siluer or ani other yeftes. And also y haue know mani ladies and gentille women that haue gote hem moche loue of gret and smale for her curtesie and humilite. And therfor y rede you be curteys and humble to gret and smale, and to do curtesie and reuerence, and speke to hem faire, and to be meke in ansuere to the pore, and thei wol praise you, and bere forthe of you good worde and good fame more than wolle the grete that ye make curtesie to ; for to grete ye make curtesie of right, the whiche is dew to hem, but the curtesie that is made to poure gentilmen, or to other of lasse degre, it comithe of fre and gentille curteys and humble hert. And the smalle peple that the curtesye and humblesse is done to, holdithe hem worshipped

therby, and thanne, ouer alle there thei comithe, thei praisithe and spekithe good of hym that dothe hem reuerence and curtesie. And of the pore that curtesie is done to, comithe gret loos and good name fro tyme to tyme, and gettithe loue of the peple; as it happed as y was not longe sethe with a companie of knyghtes and ladies, a gret ladi dede of her hode and bowed her ayenst a taillour. And one of the knyghtes saide, "Madame, ye haue done of youre hode to a taillour." And she saide that she was gladder that she had do it of to hym thanne to a lorde. And thei alle sawe her mekenesse and wisdom, and helde her wyse, and the knight leuid that tolde her of the taillour.

as a lady who bowed to a tailor.

## CHAPTER XI.

**A**fterwarde, in sayeng youre praiers atte masse or in other place, be not like the \* crane or the tortu; for thei are like the crane and the turtu that turnithe her hede and fases backward, and lokithe ouer the shuldre, and, euer steringe with the hede like a vesselle, hauithe youre loke and holdithe youre hede ferme as a best that is called a lymer; the whiche lokithe euer afore hym, withoute turning her hede hedir or thedir, but lokithe euer forth right. And therfor bethe ferme and lokithe forthe right afore you plainly, and, yef ye luste to loke asyde, turnithe youre body and uisage togedre, and so youre countenance shal be most ferme and sure; for thei that lokithe bak, and ar ofte stering with the hede, ar ofte scorned [and] mocked. Doughtres, y wolde ye hadd herde and withholde with you an ensauple upon this matere,

In praying, pray with attention, not \* [Fol. 6b. col. 2.] like the crane or the tortoise that turn their heads backwards,

but, if you want to look aside, "turn your body and visage together."

## CHAPTER XII.

Of the kingges doughters of Denmark, the whiche y will tell you.

**T**Her ben .iiij. knyghtes that mariethe hem for worship, withoute couetys of lond or good, as forto wedde kinges doughtres, or woman of noble birthe, and of good name, ferme behauing,

Of the daughters of the king of Denmark.

welle manered and condicioned, and her wiffes must be sene that thei haue that women aught to haue, and they be lykly to bere children. These .iiij. knightis is the king of Fraunce, the king of Inglond, the king of Spaine, and the king of Hungry, that is of right marschalle of cristendom in the werres ayenst the hethen.

The king of England And so it happed that the king of Inglond was to wedde, and he herde that the king of Denmark had .iiij. faire doughtres well born, and because the king and the quene of Denmarke were of notable worshippe and of good lyff, the kinge of Inglande sent ouer into Denmark certaine knightes and ladies, of the most sufficiaunt of his reame, forto see whiche was most couenable for hym of the saide doughtres. And whanne the king and the quene of Denmark sawe the embassitours, thei made hem gret chere .iiij. dayes afore that thei yede about to chese whiche of the doughtres thei wolde haue. And so the doughters were arraied and had forthe to be chose. And there a wise knight and a lady amonge the embassitours, that sette wel her eye and hert to see the countenance and the manere of hem, notwithstandinge that the eldest was fairest, she helde not her astate and port seure, for she loked smal and wynked ofte, & spake afore she understode what was saide of her, and euer loked ouer the shuldre, and euer beting her eyelyddes togedre. The secounde doughter hadd meruailous moche langage, she understode what was saide to her; and the yonggest doughter was not fairest, but she was most loueliche and goodly in her behauing countenance, and manere most seure and ferme, and spake demurly and litelle, with meke loke, and more ferme thanne ani of that other .ij. And so the embassitours toke her counsaile and auys to go againe as to the king of Inglond, and to telle hym as thei hadde founde bi the saide doughtres. And thanne he toke whiche hym lust. And thei come to the king and the quene of Denmark, and thanked hym of the worshippe that thei hadde done hym, saieng that thei wolde report to her king like as thei thought bi the doughtres, \* and thanne the kinge shulde do as hym lust. And thanne the king of Denmark gaue hem gret yeftes, and thei toke her leue and yode into Inglond, and reported as thei hadd

\* [Fol. 6, col. 1.]  
sent ambassadors to Denmark  
to seek him a wife.

They examined the king's three daughters;

the eldest was beautiful but light of manner,

the second was wise, but talked too much,  
but the youngest was quiet and humble.

\* [Fol. 6, col. 2.]  
The ambassadors

founde bi the doughtres of beaute, maners, countenance, and behauing. And so ther was moche speche whiche he shulde take, mani folke susteninge to take the elder or the secounde, for hit was more worship to take the eldest thanne the yongest. And whanne the kingges counsaile had debated ynough, the king was wise of naturelle witte, and spake last and saide, "myn aunsetters neuer married for couetise, but forto haue worships, goodnesse, and plesaunce, but y wille take none for fairenesse nor plesaunce, but y wille haue her that is of demure manere, ferme in estat and countenance, and of goodly behauing. For there is no beaute nor nobelnesse that is pere to good maneres, techethe and ferme in behauing and countenance; and there nis not in this world gretter riches thanne to haue a wyff ferme in her estate, behauing, and of good maners." And therfor the king saide, "y chese the yongest of the .iiij. doughters, for y nille none other." And so he sent for her to be his wiff, of the whiche the eldest and the secounde had gret meruaile and desdeyn. And therfor she that was most seure and stedfast in her manere and behauing, she was quene of Ingland, and the eldest suster for her highe and vnferme loking forsaken, and the secound suster for she wolde speke to moche and clatere there it nedithe not. And therfor, good doughtres, takithe ensauple \*of these .iiij. doughtres of the kinges of Denmarke, and that ye haue not youre ye to besy in lokinge, and that ye turne not youre hede hedirward and thedirward, withoute ye turne the body with, and hauithe ferme chere. And y praie you haue not mani wordes, for who so usithe to speke moche, he saithe not euer trouthe; and ther for ansuerithe atte leyser, and understonde what is saide to you or ye ansuere. And yef ye make a litelle rest in youre ansuere, ye shalle ansuere the beter and the more wisely and suerly, for there is an olde prouerbe that saithe, "asmoche is he worthe that huntithe and takithe not as he that herithe and vnderstondithe not." Yet, doughtres, wille y telle you an exsauple on this matere.

returned to  
the king of  
England,

who chose the  
youngest  
daughter for  
her good  
manners.

\* [Fol. 6b.  
col. 1.]  
Therefore be  
not light of  
manner, nor  
have too  
many words.

He that  
hunteth and  
taketh not, is  
like him that  
heareth and  
understand-  
eth not.

## CHAPTER XIII.

My father  
took me to  
see a lady I  
was to marry,

and we talked  
much to-  
gether,

\* [Fol. 66.  
col. 2.]

but I mar-  
velled at her  
familiar  
manner,

and told my  
father "she  
should be to  
me no nearer  
than she  
was."

Many have  
lost their  
marriage by

**H**It happed my frendes spake to me to be maried into a noble place, and my fader brought me to see her that y shulde haue, and there we hadd gret chere. My fader sette me in langage with her, that y shulde haue knoueleche of her speche and langage, and so we felle in wordes of prisoners, and y saide, "dameselle, it were beter to falle to be youre prisoner thanne to mani other, for y trow youre prison shuld not be so harde to me as it shulde be and y were take with Englishe men." And she answered, "y haue saie sum not long sethe that y wolde were my prisoner." And y asked her yef she wolde putte hym in euellé prison; and she saide, nay, she wolde kepe hym as she wolde her owne body; and y saide he was happi that might come into so noble a prison. What shalle y saie? she loued me ynough, and hadd a \*quicke yee, and a light, and ther was mani wordes. And so atte the laste she waxe right familier with me, for she praied me .ij. or .iij. tymes that y shulde not abide longe, but that y shulde come and see her how euer it were; of the whiche y had meruaile, seing that y was neuer aqueinted with her, nor hadd spoken, nor see her afore that tyme; and she knew welles that folke were aboute to marie us togedre. Whan we were parted, my fader asked me, "how likithe you? telle me youre avys;" and y saide, she was bothe good and faire, but she shulde be to me no nere than she was. And y tolde my fader how me liked, and of her estate and langage; and so y saide y wolde not of her, for she was so pert and so light of maners that caused me to be discouraged from her, of the whiche y haue thanked God sethe diuerse tymes. For in sothe it was not half a yeere after that she was blamed; but y note whedir it was fals or true. And after she deied. And therfor, doughtres, alle gentilwomen and nobille maydenes comen of good kyn ought to be goodli, meke, wele tached, ferme in estate, behauing, and maners, litelle softe and esy in speche, and in ansuere curteys & gentille, and not light in lokinge. For mani haue lost her mariage bi to moche discouring hem self, and to haue mani wordes; and by to gret

semblauntis making, of the whiche diuerse tymes is trowed in hem that thei neuer thought ne dede. I wolde ye wyst how Amesse, the kingges doughter of Ara[gon], lost the king of Spayne to be her husbond thorough her foly.

too light  
manner and  
too many  
words.

## CHAPTER XIV.

**H**It is contened in the gestis of \*Spaine, how the king of Aragon had .ij. doughters, and the king of Spaine wolde haue had that one. And forto finde waye how he might chese whiche hym liked best of hem, he disguised hym as a seruaut, and yede into Aragon with his embassitours, the whiche were a bisshoppe and two barouns, and hit nedith not to telle the chere that the king of Aragon made hem. And the kinges doughters ditz and made hem redy in her best wise; and in speciale the eldest doughter, that thought thei come for her. And the embassitours were .iiij. dayes therinne to see the maners and the countenances of hem. And in the mornyng whan thei salued the eldest doughter, she answered hem no thinge but bituxst her tethe; and she was fers, of gret port and hert, but her suster was humble, and fulle of curtesie, and salued humbly bothe gret and smalle. Afterward these two susteres plaide atte the tables with .ij. knightes, but the eldest chidde with the knight that plaied with her, and gaue hym angri, hasti, and hote langage. But her suster, that had lost atte the plaie as well as she, made no semblaunt of her losse, nor saide not, but made as good chere as she hadd wonne. And the king of Spaine drow hym asyde, and called to hym his embassitours, and saide hem, "ye wote welle the king of Spaine and of Fraunce shulde not wedde hem for couetise, but nobly, to a woman welle born, of good maners and condicions, and likly to come to good and worshipec, and likly to bring forthe fruit. And y haue sein these \*.ij. doughters, her gise and maners, and me thinkthe that the yongest is most curteys and humble, and is not so highe herted as that other, and therfor y chese her." And this meyni answered hym, the eldest is fairest. And he answered that "no

\*[Fol. 7,  
col. 1.]  
The king of  
Aragon  
had two  
doughters,  
and the king  
of Spaine  
would have  
one of them,  
and went to  
court, dis-  
guised, to  
make his  
choise.

The elder  
was too  
proud,

and quarrel-  
some,

but the  
younger was  
humble and  
courteous,

\*[Fol. 7,  
col. 2.]  
and the king  
chose her,

to the surprise of her father,

and anger of her sister.

A gentlewoman should have a gentle heart.

\* [Fol. 7b. col. 1.]

"Take no strife with brain-sick fools,"

worldely plesaunce and worships may not apparage to goodnesse, and in especialle to humilite. And for y haue sayne the yongest most humble and most curteys, y wille haue her." And thus he chace her. And thanne the bisshoppe & the barones of Spaine come to the kinge of Aragon, and asked for her lorde the yongest doughter; of the whiche the kinge and alle his men helde gret meruaile, that he toke not the eldest, that was fairest. But thus it happed that the yongest was quene of Spaine, for she was humble, and faire, and softe of speche to smal and grete, and for her curtesie and humilite she was chosen; of the whiche the eldest suster had gret spite and disdayn, and was almost oute of her self for anger. And therfor here is good ensauple that by humilite men growithe in loue of the world; for there nis no thinge so plesaunt as forto be humble and curteys and to smale, faire, pore, and riche, and make chere of no wyning nor losse. For a gentille woman shuld haue no wrathe in hem, for thei aught to haue gentille herte, and faire and softe in ansuere, and to be humble, as God saithe in the gospelle; for he that is most wise and riche, the more humble he aught to be. For he that humbelithe hym most, is more highed \*with God, as dede this yongest doughter of Aragon, that for her curtesye and lowlinesse conquered to be quene of Spaine, and toke it away from the eldest suster, of the whiche she had gret dispite. Faire doughters, kepe you that ye take no striff with no comberous folke, nor foles that are brayne sik, for it is gret perile; of the whiche y wolle telle you an exsauple that betidde in a castelle that diuerse ladies woned in.

## CHAPTER XV.

for a knight's daughter quarreled with a man,

Ther was a gentille knightes doughter that wratthed atte the tables with a gentille man that was riotous and comberous and hadd an euell hede; and the debate was on a point that he plaied, that she saide it was wronge; and so the wordes and the debate rose so, that she saide that he was a lewde fole, and thanne lost the game in chiding. And y saide to the gentille woman, "anger you not in no maner wise of that that he saithe,

for ye know wel that he is of highe wordes and full of foly  
 ansueres, wherfor y prairie you for youre worship that ye take no  
 debate with hym." And y tolde her lyk as y wolde haue saide  
 to my suster her [? or] doughter, but she wolde not do after me,  
 but chidde faster with the squier, more thanne afore, and saide  
 that he was not; with mani other wordes; & he answered "y  
 am beter man that ye ar woman." And she saide he lyed; and  
 the wordes rose soo till he saide, yef she were wise and good, she  
 wolde not come in mennis chaumbres bi night darkelyng with-  
 oute candelle, nor to colle and kisse men in her beddis alone, \*as  
 she dede. And she wende well she haue venged her, and saide he  
 lied; and he saide he did not, and that suche and suche had  
 saine her do hit. And so ther was mani that herde and wist  
 yt, that knew it not. And sum saide it hadd be beter for her to  
 holde her pees, and haue saide no worde, and that she had bete  
 her selff with her owne staffe; that is to saie, by her tonge and  
 her speche. And, after these wordes, she wepte and saide he had  
 sclaudred her, and that it shuld not abide unponisshed; and  
 she assailed hym agayn, and cried and chidde with hym afore alle  
 the peple, till he spake yet fouler and worse wordes, and more  
 shamfull by her, that neuer mighte falle from her for no shakinge  
 that euer she coude shake, and thus she shamed her selff with  
 her gret herte and wordes. And therfor here is a good ensauple  
 how no woman ought to chide nor to striue with a fole that she  
 supposithe haue a malicious hert, but she shulde rather eschewe  
 his companye. And whanne thei wille speke highly, lete hem be,  
 and go from hem, and speke not to hem, and saie, "frendes, y  
 see ye wyll speke riotesly and oute of the waye, and therfor y  
 wille leue you the felde, and go my way." As a knight dede to  
 a ladi that y knew, that had an euell hede and enuyouse, & saide  
 mani euell wordes to the knight afore alle folk, and he saide,  
 "ladi, hit likithe you to saie here bi me mani merueylous wordes,  
 and, yef y herkyn you, y do you no wrong; y see ye be wrothe,  
 of the whiche y am sori." & not for that yet she wolde not  
 holde \* her pees, he writhed a litell wipse of strawe, and sette it  
 afore her, and saide, "ladi, yet that ye wille chide more, chide with

who was  
 riotous,

and words  
 rose between  
 them,

\* [Fol. 7b.  
 col. 2.]

till he  
 shamed her  
 before all the  
 people.

No woman  
 should chide  
 with fools,

but leave  
 them.

\* [Fol. 8,  
 col. 1.]



that straw, for y leue you here in my stede." And he yede his waye & lefte her, and it was holde welle done of the knight; and thanne she was w[r]other thanne afore, whanne she fonde no body to chide with. And so shulde it be done to striuers and to chiders, for folke shulde not striue with foles; and thei that haue an euell hede and wold chide, folke aught to eschewe hem, as the knight dede the lady, as ye haue herd.

## CHAPTER XVI.

I wolle telle you an ensauple of a woman that ete the good morselle in the absence of her husbonde.

There was a woman had a magpie,

which told her husband of what she did when he was out,

\*[Fol. 8, col. 2.]  
and she plucked his feathers off.

Ther was a woman that had a pie in a cage, that spake and wolde telle talys that she saw do. And so it happed that her husbonde made kepe a gret ele in a litelle ponde in his gardin, to that entent to yeue it sum of his frendes that wolde come to see hym; but the wyff, whanne her husbond was oute, saide to her maide, "late us ete the gret ele, and y wille saie to my husbond that the otour hathe eten hym;" and so it was done. And whan the good man was come, the pye began to telle hym how her maistresse had eten the ele. And he yode to the ponde, and fonde not the ele. And he asked his wiff wher the ele was become. And she wende to haue excused her, but he saide her, "excuse you not, for y wote welle ye haue eten yt, for the pye hathe told me." And so ther was gret noyse betwene the man and hys wiff for etinge of the ele. But whanne the good man was gone, the maistresse and the maide \*come to the pie, and plucked of alle the fedres on the pyes hede, saieng, "thou hast discovered us of the ele;" and thus was the pore pye plucked. But euer after, whanne the pie sawe a balled or a pilld man, or a woman with an highe forhede, the pie saide to hem, "ye spake of the ele." And therfor here is an ensauple that no woman shulde ete no lycorous morcelles in the absens and withoute weting of her husbond, but yef it so were that it be with folk of worshippe, to make hem chere; for this woman was afterward mocked for the pye and the ele.

## CHAPTER XVII.

I wille saie an ensaample that it is an euell thinge  
to a woman to be in ielousie.

**T**Her was a gentille woman that was weddid to a squier, and she loued hym so moche that she was ielous ouer alle women that he spake with ; for the whiche he blamed ofte her, but it was neuer the beter. And amonge other she was gelous of a woman that hadd a gret and an highe herte ; and so on a tyme she reprobud that woman with her husbonde, and she saide she saide not true, and the wiff saide she lied. And they ranne togedres and pulled of alle that euer was on her hedes, and plucked eche other bi the here of the hede right euell. And she that was accused, caught a staffe, and smote the wiff on the nose suche a stroke that she brake her nose, and that al her lyff after she hadd her nose al croked, the whiche was a foule mayme and blemesshing of her uisage ; for it is the fairest membre that man or woman hathe, and sittithe in the \* middille of the uisage. And so was the wiff fouled and maymed alle her lyff, and her husbonde saide ofte to her, that it hadde be beter that she had not be ielous, thanne forto haue undone her uisage as she hadd. And also for that defoulyng of her uisage her husbonde might neuer finde in his herte to loue her hertly as he dede before, and he toke other women, and thus she lost his loue thorough her ielosie and foly. And therfor here [is] a good ensaample to alle good women, that thei aught to leue all suche fantasyes, and suffre and endure paciently her anger, yef thei haue ani ; as dede an aunte of myn, the whiche tolde me diuerse tymes of that she had suffered. She was a ladi of Fraunce, that might spende more thanne fyue hundred pounce bi yeere, and helde a noble estate, and she had a knight to her husbond that was merueilously lecherous, the whiche had eueri day in his hous one or two women besides the lady his wiff. And ofte tyme he rose from her to go lyge with his leude women, and alle wey, whanne he come agein from hem to bedde, he fonde euer the candelle light,

There was a  
gentlewoman  
who was  
jealous,

and quarreled  
with her rival,

and had her  
nose broken,

\* [Fol. 86.  
col. 1.]

by which she  
lost her hus-  
band's love.

My aunt had  
a husband  
who loved  
other women,

and when he  
came from  
them she  
gave him  
water to wash  
him,

and by her  
meekness  
regained his  
heart and  
love.

\* [Fol. 8b.  
col. 2.]

Women may  
rebuke their  
husbands  
with fairnesse  
rather than  
with rude-  
ness,

for jealousy is  
a proof of  
love,

• but the wisest  
should be the  
least jealous.

\* [Fol. 9,  
col. 1.]

and water to wasshe his hondes, and he saide he come from the priue. And thanne saide the ladi, "somoche haue ye the more nede to wasshe you ;" and she saide neuer no thing ellys to hym, but yef it were atte sum tyme whanne thei were meri and allone, she wolde saie, "syr, y know alle youre doinge by suche women and suche, but sethe it ys youre lust, and that y may sette no remedie theron, y wille make you nor them neuer the worse chere ; for y were a fole to slee my selff for youre \*sportes. But y prairie you, sethe it is wellle, that ye make me neuer the worse chere, and that y lese not youre loue, nor that ye make me not the worse semblaunt, and of the remenaunt y reporte me to you, y wolle suffre it." And so with her goodly wordes he repented hym, and was conuerted in goodnesse atte the laste, and he dede nomore euellle ; and thus with fairenesse she ouercome hym. And bi this ensauple it may be sene that a woman may chastise her husbonde, and make hym do wellle, withe fairnesse rather thanne with rudenesse. For ther is mani men that haue euellle hertys, and thei be foule spoken to, wille do the worse, notwithstandinge the husbond aught [not] to loue his wiff the wors thou she be ielous ouer hym. For the wise man saithe that ielosye is a great ensauple of loue, for he that louithe me not, rechithe neuer whedir y do wellle or euellle ; but my frende is sori whanne y do euellle, and therfor ielosie is neuer withoute gret loue. But there is .ij. diuerse ielosyes, whiche that one ys worse thanne that other. For there is one withoute reson, as a man to be ielous withoute cause, and in suche wise as to shame hym selff and his wiff ; but that other ys of a woman that is aferde lest an other shulde haue the herte of her husbonde, that she augh[t] to haue her selff, after the law of God and the chirche. But the wisest aught to be leste ielous, and restreine and take lest hede, for that is gret wisdom who may do it ; but yef the husbonde perceiuithe of the wiff sum leude taches in her gouernance or behauing, that he aught to be ielous. \*For he must take her and speke therof priueli betwene hem two, that no man wete it, for drede of sclaunder and wratthinge of her, and sauing her the gret loue, "that ye loue me wellle, neuer lete youre hert

turne to loue none other but me, and therof y am suore and with the grace of God, ye wille kepe youre worship and myn." And with suche goodly wordes ye aught to entrete youre wiff<sup>2</sup> to bring her oute of her leudenesse ; for yef a man rebuke her, and fare foule with her, it wille make her do and thenke the worse, as it were to putte fere in flexe ; for diuerse women be more fers in her euell dedes thanne in goodnesse. And therfor it is gret drede to fare foule with hem in suche materes. And though a woman haue a litelle debate and noyse for ielousie with her husbond, she aught not to loue hym the worse ; for she aught to thinke that he dothe it for the feruent loue that he hathe to her, and for ferde that ani other shulde haue the loue of her sauf he hym self, and that yef so be that an other man might haue her loue, he shal neuer haue her loue he shal neuer haue it after, and that the ioye of her mariage is done, and her housholde lost.

A man should  
entreat his  
wife with  
goodly words,

and a woman  
should not  
love her  
husband the  
less for a little  
jealousy.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

And therfor here is a good ensauple to amesure in this matere bothe herte and thought. Also, a woman ought not to striue with her husbonde, nor yeue hym no displeaunce [nor] ansuere her husbonde afore straungers, as dede onis a woman that dede ansuere her husbonde afore straungeres like a rampe, with gret nelonis wordes, dispraising hym and setting hym atte not ; of the whiche he was ofte ashamed, and bade her holde her pees for shame, but \*the more faire he spake, the worse [s]he dede. And he, that was angri of her gouernaunce, smote her with his fiste downe to the erthe ; and thanne with hys fote he stroke her in the uisage and brake her nose, and alle her lyff after she had her nose coked, the whiche shent and dysfigured her uisage after, that she might not for shame shewe her uisage, it was so foule blemished. And this she had for her euell and gret langage, that she was wont to saie to her husbonde. And therfor the wiff aught to suffre and lete the husbonde haue the wordes, and to be maister, for that is her worshippe ; for it is shame to here

Not ought she  
to strive with  
him before  
strangers,

for a husband  
once struck  
his wife  
\* [Fol. 9,  
col. 2.]  
and broke her  
nose, because  
she answered  
him before  
people.

But, when  
they are  
alone, a wife  
may counsel  
her husband.

striff betwene hem, and in especial before folke. But y saie not but whanne thei be allone, but she may telle hym with goodly wordes, and counsaile hym to amende yef he do amys. And yef he canne ani good, thanne he wille cunne her moche thanke, and saie she dothe as she aught to do. And thus shulde a good woman do; as dede Hester the quene of Sury, the whiche had a king to her husbonde, that was hote and hasti, but whanne he was angri she wolde saie no wordes till he was appesed. And whanne the hete was passed, she might rule hym as her lust. And this was gret witte of that ladi, and so shulde alle women do. And alle women that ben gret herted and misansueringe her husbondes, that wolde not do her husbondes comaundement, be not of the obeisaunce that a merchauntez wiff was, of the whiche y wille telle you an exauple and a tale.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Three mer-  
chants  
\* [Fol. 96.  
col. 1.]  
laid a  
wager whose  
wife was most  
obedient.

**H**It happed onis there were .iiij. marchauntes that yede homwarde from a faiere, and \*as thei felle in talkinge, ridyng on the waye, one of hem saide, "it is a noble thinge a man to haue a good wiff that obeiethe and dothe his biddinge atte alle tymes." "Be my trouthe" saide that other "my wiff obeiethe me truly." "Be God," saide that other "y trowe myn obeiethe best to her husbonde." Thanne he that beganne furst to speke saide, "lete leye a wager of a dener, and whos wiff that obeiethe worst, lete her husbonde paie for the dener," and thus the wager was leyde. And thei ordeined amonges hem how thei shulde saie her wyfes, for thei ordeined that eueri man shulde bidde his wyff lepe into a basin that thei shulde sette afore her, and they were suoren that none shulde late his wiff haue wetting of her wager, saue only thei shulde saye, "lokithe, wiff, that y comaunde be done." How euer it be, after one of hem bade his wiff lepe into the basin that he had sette afore her on the grounde, and she answered and axed wherto, and he saide, "for it is myn luste, and y will ye do it." "Be God," quod she, "y wille furst wete wherto ye

The first told  
his wife to  
leap into a  
basin, and she  
asked,  
"Why?"

wille haue me lepe into the basin." And for no thinge her husbond coude do she wolde not do it. So her husbonde up with his fust, and gaue her .ij. or .iij. gret strokes ; and thanne yede thei to the secounde marchauntys hous, and he comaunded that what euer he bade do it shulde be do, but it was not longe after but he bade his wiff lepe into the basin that was afore her on the flore, and she asked wherto, and she saide she wolde not for hym. And thanne he toke a staffe, and al tobete her ; and thanne thei yode to the \*thridde marchauntes hous, and there thei fonde the mete on the borde, and he rowned in one of his felawes heres, and saide, "after dyner y wille assaie my wiff, and bidde her lepe into the basin." And so thei sette hem to her dyner. And whan thei were sette, the good man saide to his wiff, "whateuer y bidde, loke it be done, how euer it be." And she that loued hym, and dredde hym, herde what he saide, and toke hede to that worde ; but she wost not what he ment, but it happed that thei had atte her dyner rere eggis, and there lacked salt on the borde, and the good man saide, "wiff, sele sus table ;" and the wiff understode that her husbonde had saide, "seyle sus table," the whiche is in Frenshe "lepe on the borde." And she, that was aferde to disobeie, lepte upon the borde, and threw downe mete, and drinke, and brake the verres, and spilt alle that there was on the borde. "What," saide the good man, "thanne canne ye none other plaie, wiff?" "Be ye wode, sir," she saide, "y haue do youre biddinge, as ye bade me to my power, notwithstandinge it is youre harme and myn ; but y had leuer ye had harme and y bothe, thanne y disobeied youre biddinge. For ye saide 'seyle sus table.'" "Nay," quod he, "y saide, sele sus table, that is to saie, salt on the borde." "Bi my trouthe," she saide, "y understode that ye bade me lepe on the borde," and there was moche mirthe and laughinge. And the other two marchauntes saide it was no nede to bidde her lepe into the basin, for she obeyed ynough ; wher thorough thei consented that her husbond had wonne the wager, and thei had lost bothe. And after she was gretly preised \* for her obeisaunce to her husbonde, and she was not bete as were that other .ij. wyues that wolde not do her

so he struck  
her with his  
fist.

The second  
told his wife  
to do so and  
she would  
not,

so he beat  
her with a  
staffe.

\* [Fol. 96.  
col. 2.]

The thrid told  
his wife to put  
salt on the  
table ;

and she,  
mistaking  
him, jumped  
on the table  
herself,

by which her  
husband won  
the wager.

\* [Fol. 10,  
col. 1.]

A woman, the better she is treated, the better she should behave.

husbondes comaundement. And thus pore men canne chaste her wyues with fere and strokes, but a gentille woman shulde chastise her selff with fairenesse, for other wise thei shulde not be taught. And a gentille woman, the fairer that she is ferde with, the more ferdfulle she shulde be to displese or to disobeye her husbonde; for the good doutithe and louithe her husbondes, as dede the thridde marchauntes wiff, that for fere to disobeye her husbonde leped on the borde. & so aught eueri good woman do the comaundement of her husbonde, be it euel or welle, for yef he bidde her thing that she aught not to do, it is his shame. Now haue y treted of the obeysaunce of the drede that a woman aught to haue to her husbonde; and how she shulde not ansuere hym ouerthwartly atte euery worde, for it is gret shame for her; and also what perile it is to ansuere to eueri worde, as dede the knightes doughter, that spake to the leude squier, the whiche thorough her wordes undede her good name and her worshippe. But there be mani folke that are so hasti and highe herted, that for her hastinesse saithe alle that thei knowe that comithe to her mouthe; and therfor it is gret perile to beginne to chide with suche folke, for who doutithe it, he puttithe his worshippe in iupardye and auenture. For many folke wille saie more thanne they know, to venge hem selff, thow that they saie false.

## CHAPTER XX.

Of the lady who gave "good morsels"

\* [Fol. 10, col. 2.]  
to two little dogs,

I wille telle you of a lady that gaue the flesshe and the goode morselles of mete to the litelle dogges.

**T**Her was a lady that had two litelle doggis, and she loued hem so that she toke gret plesaunce in the sight and feding of hem. And she made euery day dresse and make for hem disshes with soppes of mylke, and after gaue hem flesshe. But there was ones a frere that saide to her that it was not wel done that the dogges were fedde and made so fatte, and the pore pepille so lene and famisshed for hunger. And so the lady, for his saieng, was wrothe with hym, but she wolde not amende

it. And after she happed she deied, and there felle a wonder meruailous sight, for there was seyn euer on her bedde .ij. litelle blake dogges, and in her deyeng thei were about her mouthe and liked it, and whanne she was dede, there the dogges had lyked it was al blacke as cole, as a gentille woman tolde me that sawe it, and named me the lady. And therfor here is a good ensauple that ladyes nor gentille women shulde not haue her plesaunce in suche bestys, nor yeue hem that the pore pepille might be susteyned with that deyen for hunger, the whiche be Goddes creatoures and seruautis made to his lyknesse. And the women that dothe so, haue litelle understonde the wordes of the gospelle, there God saithe, "who dothe good to the pore in myn name, he dothe it to myn selff." These that done soo was not lyche the quene Blaunche, seint Lowes moder; for she alwey made take the mete afore her, and yeue it to the most nedy. And so dede seint Lowys, her sone, after her, \* for he uisited the pore and fedde hem with his hondes. The plesaunce of alle goode women aught to be to uisite and fede the pore and faderles children, and to norshe and clothe yong litelle children, as dede an holy woman that was countesse of Mans, that norshed euer xxx<sup>ti</sup> faderles children, and saide that was her sporte; and therfor she was loued of God, and had good lyff and ende, and atte her dethe was saine a grete clerete & light and fulle of smalle children, innocentes, about her; and that sight was not the litelle blacke dogges that was sayn atte the dethe of that other ladi that ye herde of afore.

and when she died two little black dogs were seen on her bed;

an example that no lady should take pleasure in such beasts.

\* [Fol. 106. col. 1.]  
The pleasure of women should be to feed the poor.

## CHAPTER XXI.

How the knight saide unto his doughtres that thei shulde not beginne furst to take new gises of rayement.

**F**Aire doughtres, y prairie you that ye be not the furst to take new shappes and gises of array of women of straunge contrey, as y wille telle you there was a debate betwene a

I pray you be not the first to take new shapes of attire.



baronesse, that duelled in Guyen, and an other lorde that was a wise knight and a malicious. For the baronesse saide unto hym, "cosin, y come out of Bretaine, and there y haue sene my cosin youre wiff, but she nis not arrayed like as ladies of this contrey of Guyene be, nor of diuerse other plasez here aboute, for her hodes, taylles, and sleues be not furred ynowgh after the shape that rennithe now." And the knight ansuered, "sethe she nys not arrayed on youre gise, and that ye thenke her array and her furre to litelle, and that ye blame me for it, forsothe ye shall haue nomore cause to blame me, for y wille make arraye her as \* nobly as ani of you alle, and as queintly ; for ye haue but half youre hodes & cotes furred with ermyn or meneuer, and y wol do beter to her, for y wolle furre her gowne, coleres, sleues, and cotes, the here outwarde ; thus she shall be beter purfiled and furred thanne other ladies and gentille women. And suppose ye not that y wille see that she be arraid after the state of the good women and worshipfulle of Fraunce, nor of them of this cuntre, that hathe not take the state of the unthrifti women that bene euell women of her body and chambreres to Englishe men and other men of werre that duellen with hem as her lemmannys, for thei were the furst that brought up this astate that ye use of gret purfiles and slitte cotes, for y haue of that tyme and y sawe it. And to take arraie that suche women bringithe up furst, y holde hym that dothe it but febly conseled. And as to my wiff, she shal not ; but the princesses and ladyes of Ingland haue taken up the saide stat and gise, and they may welle holde it yef hem luste. But y haue herde saie that ladies and gentille women shulde sonner take the gise after good women thanne after euelle, and not take the euelle such enoueltees." And so these wordes weren saide betwene the baronesse and the knight tofore alle the peple, and the baronesse helde her pees for shame, for she wost not what to saie nor to ansuere ; and so ther was mani that saide it hadde be beter for her to haue holde her pees. And therfor, doughtres, ye may see by this ensauple, hit is good to holde the mene astate of the good women, and

A lady found fault with a knight that his wife was not dressed well enough.

His reply.

"Ye shall have no more cause to blame me ;  
\* [Fol. 106. col. 2.]

my wife shall be better dressed than any other,

but not after the manner of evil women and foreigners, for

ladies should dress after good women rather than evil."

Therefore it is good to dress like the "common

of \*th[e] comune astate of the rewme, that is to saie the state of the most partie that good women usithe, and in especialle suche astate as thei that werithe it may meintaine. Forto take array of straunge contrey hathenot be used, and leue that of his owne, that causithe mani to be mocked and scorned, as ye may see bi this knight that spake thus to his lady. And wetithe who so takithe the furst a nouelte of array on hym, thei ben moche spoken of, but now a dayes and a woman here of a newe gette, she wille neuer be in pees tille she haue the same. And the wiues saien to her husbondes euery day, "sir, suche a wyff and suche hathenot suche goodly arraye that besemithe her welle, and y prairie you y may haue of the same;" and yef her husbonde saie, "wiff, yef suche haue suche arraie, suche that are wiser thanne thei haue it not," she wil saie, "no force it is, for thei canne not were it, and yef y haue it ye shul see how welle it wille become me, for y can were it." And thus with her wordes her husbonde must nedis ordeine her that she desirithe, other he shalle neuer haue pees with her, for thei wol finde so mani resones that thei wille not be werned. But the women that dothe and saithe thus, be not most wisest nor canne not best her good, but thei haue more her herte to the plesaunce of the worlde thanne to her husbondes profit. And there is a maner now amonge seruyng women of lowe astate, the whiche is comen, for thei furre her colers, that hangin doune into the middil of the backe, and thei furre her heles, the whiche is doubbed with filthe, and it is sengille about her brest; the whiche arraie y praise \*not in winter nor somer, for hem were beter take the furre that hangithe about her helis in the winter and sette it about her stomakes, for that had more nede of hete thanne her helys, and in somer it were beter away, for flies hidethe hem therinne; and therfor y praise not the arraye nor that nouelte in a pore man, but y saie it not be women that may susteine and meintayne it atte her lust; for y caste me not to speke nor to medille me of no thinge of her astate nor arraie that aught to displese hem, for it longithe not to me but to worshippe and to obeye hem to my power. Nor y understonde

\* [Fol. 11, col. 1.]  
estate of the realm,"

and to follow the dress of wise, and not of vain women.

Serving-women now wear fur on their collars and heels,

which in winter were  
\* [Fol. 11, col. 2.]  
better on their stomachs,

and in summer is a shelter for flies.

In this booke I  
speak only to  
my daughters  
and servants.

not to speke in this boke to none other women but to myn propre doughtres and seruantis of myn howse, and forto shew hem how what is my luste and plesaunce that thei do. Doughtres, it is a gret perile to take stryff with folke that ben wise, or to dispraise the maners of hem. For gladly folke haue but litelle worshippe that tellithe or repreuith the ani suche folke of thaire condicions.

## CHAPTER XXII.

At a feast a  
lady told a  
knight

AS it happed that there were atte a feast diuerse lordes & ladies, amonge the whiche was a knight that was a man wise of wordes and goodly behauing among ladies and gentille women; and so ther was a ladi saide to hym, afore alle folke, "sir, ye are moche holde to youre God that hathe made you so faire and so goodly a knight, that it is meruaile but ye haue an euell condicion, that is to saye that ye are fulle of iangelyng, and haue an euell tonge and canne not holde youre pees\*." "Nou ladi," saide he, "is that the worst tache that ye know bi me?" and she saide, "ye forsothe yt is the worst." "Now," saide he, "late you and me haue an euen iuge, and y trow it wille be founde that ye haue worse taches thanne y, for y wille shew how ye haue saide and reproued me of the worst that ye coude saie by me, and y haue saide no thinge of you. And therfor me thinkithe that ye haue a worse tonge thanne y, and me thinkithe, ladi, y haue not so light a tonge, nor iangille not somoche." As the lady herde hym, and helde her pees, and thought that she wolde she had be stille, and that she had not spoken one worde nor striuen with hym for diuerse causes; for the pepille that herde hym suffre alle her ungoodly wordes, weren wrothe with her, and she hadd ben beter to haue ben stille thanne to haue reproued a man opinly afore the companye. And therfor whanne one wold reprove one of his condicions, he shulde thenke of his owne. Yet y wille telle you more on this matere, how Bursygaunt was amonge .iiij. ladies that caste forto haue made hym ashamed. And he, that was a wise knight amonges alle other knightes, halpe hym as ye shulle here.

that he was  
handsome,  
but had an  
evil tongue;

\* [Fol. 11b.  
col. 1.]  
but he replied,  
"I had said  
no evil of  
you, and you  
haue of me,  
therefore your  
tonge is  
worse than  
mine."

Therefore  
think of your  
own evil  
before you  
reprove  
others.

## CHAPTERS XXIII, XXIV.

[Of Bourcicaut and the three ladies ; and of three  
other ladies who accused a knight.]

These .iiij. ladies satte togedres in a priue chambre, and talked of her auentures, unto the tyme that one saide, "Moche maugre haue she of us that wille not telle, of good felawship here amonge us .iiij., of that she shal be asked, that is, yef ani of us was this yeere praied of loue." "Truly," saide the furst, "y haue ben praied." The secounde and the thridde saide the same. "Now," saide the \*boldest ladi, "sori loue haue she that tellithe not the name of hym that last praied her;" and there thei were acorded thei shulde telle. "For sothe," saide the furst, "it was Bursigaunt that praied me." "And in good sothe," saide the secound, "so dede he me." "By my trouthe," quod the thridde, "and he praied me also." "In good faithe," saide the .iiij. ladies, "he nis not so trewe a knight as we wende, for he is but a tromper and a iaper, no fors, late us sende for hym." And whanne he come he saide, "My ladyes, what wolde ye?" and thei bade hym sitte downe on the grounde by hem. And he saide, "Sethe y am come and must sitte, late me haue sum quyshon or a stole, for y might, and y satte lowe, breke sum of my pointes, and ye wold saie perauenture it were sumwhat ellys." And so thei gate hym a stole; and, whanne he was sette, as thei that were fulle of ire and wrathe, saide, "Bursegaunt, we are foule deceiued in you the tyme passed, for we wende that ye had be a true knight, and ye are but a mocker, and a iaper of ladies, and that is a foule tache." And he answered, "Ladies, how knowe ye that?" "For, sire, y[e] haue here praied my cosin of loue, and so haue ye me, and ye saide ye loued us, and eche of us had youre herte, the whiche was fals lesinge, for ye might [not] loue us alle thre best, for ye are not thre persones, nor ye haue not thre hertys, and therfor ye are fals and deseiuable, and ye aught not to be sette in the nombre of true knightis."

Three ladies  
talked of  
Boucicaut,

\* [Fol. 11b.  
col. 2.]

and each said  
he had talked  
to her of  
love;

and they sent  
for him,

and told him  
he was not a  
true knight,

\* [Fol. 12,  
col. 1.]

and proposed  
to draw lots  
for him,

but he said  
he would  
have none  
of them.

Thus men can  
find ways to  
help them-  
selves; as did  
a man who,  
when four  
women were  
going to kill  
him,

asked the  
greatest  
whore to  
strike first.  
None did;  
\* [Fol. 12,  
col. 2.]

and so he  
got away  
from them.

And he saide, "Ladies, ye haue wronge, & that wolde y shewe you and ye wylle yeue me leue to speke, and y wille telle you whi. For atte that tyme y spake \* with eche of you, y loued her best that y spake with, and thought truly the same, and me thinkithe therfor ye be in the wronge to haue suche langage on me, but y must suffre." And whanne thei sawe hym nomore abashed, thei saide they wolde drawe cutte amonge hem ther, to wete to whom he shulde abide. "In good faith," saide the furst ladye, "y wille drawe no cutte for hym, for y quite my parte of hym;" and that other .ij. ladyes saide, "So do we oure part, for we wille not of hym." "A!" saide the knight, "ye nede not stryue, for she nys not here that shalle haue parte of me;" and with that he rose and yede his waye, and lete the .iiij. ladies be there alle abashed and shamed. And therfor it is a gret perille to beginne to haue langage with suche men that canne skille of the worlde; and therfor here is an ensauple that no woman shulde take no striff nor wordes with suche men, for there is mani women that beginnithe langage with a man that canne not ende it welle, for men canne fynde weyes to helpe hem selff, as dede a man that was acused to .iiij. ladies of suche an other dede as dede Bursigaunt; and thei swore he shulde deye, and neuer deceiue ladi more, and thei caught and shette hym in a chambre, and as thei come eueriche with a knyff forto slee hym, he saide, "Ladies, it likithe you that y shalle deye withoute mercy, y prairie you of a bone." And they graunted hym. And thanne he required hem that the strengest hore of hem shulde smite furst the stroke. And thei stode and loked eueriche upon other, and ther was none that wolde touche \* hym for shame, for ther was none that wolde take it on her that it were she. And he saw hem so abaissed, & he ranne and opened the dore, and yede his waye; and thus was the knight saued, and thei abode abashed and mocked. And therfor there be mani thoughtes and wyles with a man to helpe hym self atte nede; but y wille leue this matere, and go to women that wol goo to see iustinge and other diuerse sightes, and also wol go on pilgrimage more for sporte than for deuocion.

## CHAPTER XXV.

[Of ladies who go to justs and pilgrimages.]

I wille telle you of a lady that caught a gret blame and sclandre atte iusting withoute cause. She was a faire yonge lady, and made there good chere, and daunsed and sange withe knightes and squieres, & alle her herte was sette on the worldes plesaunce, notwithstanding her husbonde was not best apaied with her for her outgoinge ; but she was glad alleway whanne she was praied to go oute, and she fonde menes to her husbonde that she was alle waye praied that she might go to. Her husbonde werned her not, for ferde lasse thei that praied hym wolde be wrothe, and leste men wolde deme that he were ielous of his wiff ; and he dede gret coste to make her fresshe and gay at the saide festis, for the worshipp of her frendes, but she might haue perceiued mani tymes that it was ayenst her husbondes wille that she yede to suche festis. And so it happed onis atte a fest that she was atte be night, thei quenched the torches sodenly, and made gret noyse and crye, \* and whanne the light was light agein, the ladies husbondes brother was there, and sawe his suster-in-lawe a litelle asyde with a knight in a corner ; and in good trouthe y trow there was no thing done but good, but neuer the latter the brother tolde her husbonde, the whiche all his lyff after mistrusted that his wiff had done amys, and loued his wiff neuer after so welle as he dede before. And so there was neuer pees betwene hem, but euer glomyng, louring, and chiding, and alle her housholde yede to not for this cause.

Y knew another lady that gladly yede and was ledde to festis, and she caute an euell name bi a lorde, that she was so fulle of sorugh that she was nigh dede, and in so moche thought that she dwyned away that there laft no thinge on her saue the bones. And whanne she shulde be dede, she sent after her Saueoure, and called alle her frendes about

Of a lady who caught great blame by going to justs ;

and her husband let her go,

and made her fresh and gay, though against his will.

And at a feast, after the lights were put  
\* [Fol. 12b, col. 1.]  
out, she was seen in a corner with a knight,

and her husband never loved her after, because she had an evil name.

When dying she told her friends

that she was  
innocent of  
any evil.

\* [Fol. 12b.  
col. 2.]

- Therefore it is  
great peril for  
a woman to  
go to feasts,  
when she  
should be at  
home.

If you have  
to go to a  
feast,

keep some  
servant near  
you,

not for fear  
of evil, but of  
evil tongues.

her, and saide, " Lokithe on me ; am y lyk her that ye were wont to see atte festis and playes, so faire, fresshe, and goodly ? but that tyme is passed, for y must to the erthe thennes that y come fro." And she saide to the lordes, knightes, squiers, and ladies, and gentilwomen that were about her, " There is moche speche betwene suche a lorde and me, but that Lorde y receiue here be my dampnacion yef euer he had to do more with my body thanne hadd my fader, notwithstandinge he and y hadd gret comunicacion diuerse tymes, but it was neuer in no ueleni, nor in no euell thought nor in dede." And so alle thei that stode about her were abasshed, for thei wende in her the contrary ; not for alle that her \*worship was blemisshed and blamyd with hym, and, yef she had not use to goo to festis and other sportes in her husbondes absence, hit had not happed her. And therfor it is gret perile a woman to acustume her or to desire to goo to suche festis ther she might abide atte home with her worshippe saued, vndefamed of her good name ; for atte suche places mani women takithe moche blame withoute cause. But y saie not but atte sum tyme that the[i] must nedis goo to obeie lordes and her frendes wille, with her husbondes leue. And therfor, faire doughtres, yef it happe that ye must nedis goo to suche festis, and that ye may not forsake it whan it is night that thei begynne to syng and daunce, loke that ye haue euer a frende or sum cosin or seruaunt of youre by you, for ferde and perille and euell speche, that yef it happed the torches to be queint, as thei were atte the feste, that thei might be nigh you, not for no ferde of none euell that ye wolde do, but for ferde of euell tonges that gladlyer wolle saie harme than good, and more thanne thei knew. And it is good that ye do so for the suerte of youre good name, that thei that stondithe bi you may saie, yef that thei here a false iangler or a lyer saie au lit on you that is not true, that thei may be sure to saye that it ys false.

CHAPTER XXVI.

I wol telle you another ensauple of hem that wolde not do on her good clothes on the halydaies nor on the sondayes in the worshipe of oure Lorde Ihesu, of the whiche y wolde ye knew the ensauple how the gentille woman abraided the lady her maistres of.

**T**Her was a ladi that had good clothes, but she wolde not were hem, but yef she supposed to be atte sum fest or that she wende to finde sum lordes or gret straungers. And so it happed that oure lady day felle on the sonday, and her mayde asked her, "Madame, whi will ye not do on this day a goode garment in the worshipe of oure ladi day, and of the sonday?" "Whi," saide she, "we shulle see no folke of astate to-daye." And her mayde saide, "God and his moder is of gretter state thanne any worldely folke, for he may take and geue alle thing atte his luste, for alle comithe of hym, and therfor his dayes and his moderes dayes ye shulde worshipe." "Pees," saide the ladi, "God and the preest seithe me eueri day, and so dothe not the strangers. And therfor it is beter to make me gay whanne y see hem thanne ayenst God." And the mayde ansuered, "Madame, that was euell saide for ferde of that may falle." And the ladi saide, "Falle what wolte falle, y wol do more euella." And assone as she had saide that worde, there come a sodeine wynde that smote the ladi that she might not stere nor remeue more thanne a stone, and fro that tyme forwarde she most be bore two and fro, and swalle, and become grete. And thanne she knowleged her misdede, and vowed pilgrimages, and was caried to hem in a litter. And to alle folke of worshipe she tolde what was the cause of her sekenesse, and that it was the uengeaunce of God that fell on her, the whiche she had welde deserued, for she saide that alle her lyff she had sette her to worshipe the worlde more thanne God, and had more ioye \*to make her plesaunte to the worlde, to folke of astate, and straungers, that she might haue the lokes

\* [Fol. 13, col. 1.]

A lady had good clothes, but would not wear them,

not even on our Lady's day,

and a sudden wind smote her, so that she could not move,

for worship-  
ping the world  
more than  
God,

\* [Fol. 13, col. 2.]



and being  
vain of  
people's  
praise.

\* [Fol. 13b.  
col. 1.]  
But on her  
repentance  
she was  
healed.

This is an ex-  
ample how  
people should  
wear their  
best clothes  
on holydays,  
for worship of  
God.

of hem, than for loue or ani deuocion that she had to God, other to ani of his seintes. And after she saide to yonge gentille women, "Takithe hede of the vengeaunce of God that is falle on me; for sum tyme y had a faire body, and smal, as euery body saide, to plese me. And y, for bobaunce and for to be preised of the worlde, y-clothed me in riche clothinge and in good furies, and y made it to be shape in the best wise, streite and welle sittinge and iuste, that sum tyme the fruite that was in me suffered payne and was in perelle; and alle that y dede to haue veyne glorie of this worlde. And whanne y herde the pepille that preised me, the whiche thei dede to plese me, saieng, 'Here is a faire body of a woman the whiche is lykly to be loued of a worthi knight,' thanne my herte reioysed of gladnesse. Now may ye see what y am, for y am gretter thanne a pipe. And y am not lyk her that was sumtyme so queint and gay in my good arraye, streite and iuste, that y helde so chereyly that y wolde not were it in the halydayes and sondayes in the worshipec of God. And therfor, ladyes and frendes, God hathe shewed me my foly for sparing of my clothis on the holy day, and to were hem afore men of astate and straungers, to be preised and haue the losse and loking of hem. Wherfor y praie you alle that ye take here atte me a faire ensauple." And thus compleyned the sike lady, the whiche was thus swolen an hole yere. And after, whanne God \*had saine her contricion and repentaunce, he sent her helthe, and heled her hole of alle her sekenesse, and euer lowly to her God, and gaue her good garmentis for Goddis sake to the nedy, and her self leued simpli, not hauing her herte to the bobant of the worlde, as she had before. And therfor, faire doughtres, here is a faire ensauple how folke aught beter to arraie hem on holydayes in worshipec and for the loue of God that sendithe alle, and for the loue of hys blessed moder and saintes, thanne for to plese the sight of the worldely peple, the whiche are but donge and erthe, for to haue the praisinge of hem; for alle tho that do so for the worldes plesaunce, y wene they displese God, and that he will do his uengeaunce on hem in this worlde or

in that other, as he dede on this lady that ye haue herde.  
And therfor take heed on these ensaumples, good doughtres.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

I wille telle you an ensauple on this matere.

**H**It befelle that seint Bernarde, that was an holy man and of gret richesse and birthe, lefte alle his possessiones and good, and yede to serue God in an abbey; and for his holy lyuing, and of weringe of the heyre, and doinge gret abstinence and almes dedes, made that he was chose to be abbot of that place. And he hadd a gret ladi to his suster, that come to see hym withe gret meyni, welle arraied with riche clothinge, and riche atyred of perles and presious stones. And in this array she come afore her brother seint \*Bernard. And whanne he sawe her in that array, he turned to her his backe and blessed hym, and the lady was ashamed, and asked whi he ne wolde with her speke. And he saide that he had gret pitee to see her so disgised, and in that pride that she was inne. And she dede of her riche atyre and gay clothes, and toke other symple arraye. And he saide. "Suster, yef y[e] loue youre bodi, by reson y[e] shuld beter loue youre sowle: wene ye not that ye displese God and his aungels to see in you suche pompe and pride to aorne suche a carion as is youre body, whiche withinne .vij. dayes that the soule ys parted from the body, he sauerithe in suche wise that no creatoure may suffre to be nighe it or see it, with gret abhominacion? Faire suster, whi thenke ye not that the pore peple that deyen for hungir and colde, that for the sixte part of youre gay arraye .xl. persones might be clothed, refresshed, and kepte from the colde?" And thus Bernarde declared the foly and the pompe of the worlde to his suster, and also the sauement of her soule. And thanne the ladi wepte, and solde away her clothes, and leuid after an holy lyff, and had loue of God, aungeles, and holy seintez, the whiche is beter thanne of the worldely pepille. Therfor, doughtres, here ys an

Saint Bernard  
was an abbot,

whose sister  
came richly  
dressed to  
see him,

\* [Fol. 13b.  
col. 2.]

for which he  
blamed her  
of pride.

Then she sold  
her clothes,  
and led a  
holy life.

\* [Fol. 14,  
col. 1.]  
It is better  
to have less  
rayment,  
than that the  
poor should  
want.

ensauple how folke shulde not haue thaire herte on the worlde, nor make hem queint to plesse it and them that be there inne, but late yeue parte of that God hathe sent to the nedy in his name. And he that dothe so, may gete hym hys sauement; for it is beter \*to haue lasse garnementis thanne the pore shulde lacke. For who so settithe hym al to haue plesaunce of the world, it ys foly and temptacion of the fende; and folke aught to arraye hem more for loue and worship of God thanne for worldely foule plesaunce, the whiche ys but shadow, and is not worthe to the rewarde of hym that alle may yeue and sende.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

An example  
of talking  
at masse.

An other ensauple y wille telle you of them that usen to clatre, speke, and iangle atte the masse, in the whiche whanne thei shulde haue herde the deuyne seruice of God.

A hermit had  
a chapel to  
which pil-  
grims came,

**H**It is conteyned in the gestis of Athenes, that there was an holy hermite that hadd a chapelle of seint Iohan in his hermitage; and for the holinesse of the good man, and in the worshippe of seint Iohan, the knightes, ladyes, & gentille women of that contrey come thedir on pilgrimage. And whanne thei were come, the ermite saide hem a masse; and as he had saide the gospelle, he turned towarde the peple, & sawe hem rounne, iape, counsaile, and iangle, eche with other. And as he loked on hem and sawe her folysshe countenaunce, he was ware that there was atte eueriche of her eeres an horrible fende, that wrote alle that thei saide, and loughe hem to scorne; and the blak orible fendes yede lepinge on her hedys, hornes, and riche atyre, as dothe the briddes that sittithe on trees and lepithe from braunche to braunche; of the whiche the holy ermyte was gretly abashed and meruayled. And whan he was in the canoun of hys masse, he herde hem clatre, laughe, iangle, and \*borde of highe, that it was gret meruaile of the holy man, [and he] smote hys honde on the boke to make hem hold her pees. But there was

and at mass  
he saw them  
talking and  
wrangling  
together,

and at their  
sides black  
fiends wrote  
down their  
words.

\* [Fol. 14,  
col. 2.]

sum that dede not, and thanne sayde the ermyte to God, "Lorde, and it be thi wille, make these folke holde her pees atte masse, and that they may know her foly." Thanne sodenly all they that iangeled beganne to crye lyke wode folke oute of her mynde, that it was a piteous thinge to here. And whanne the ermyte had saide masse, he tolde hem how he saw the fendes of helle on her hedes, hornes, and tyre, and tolde hem the perilles and the synne that it was to make suche clateringe and leude wordes, iapes, and countenaunces atte the masse. For there is no man atte the masse shulde do no thinge ellys but praie God deuoutly; and these fendes that he sawe was on her hedes, tyre, and hornes, that clatered and spake of her foly of louc atte messe, and thought more on her iolytees and the worldes delite, and to haue the loke of the musardes, thanne thei dede on the seruice of God. But there was sum in the chapelle that were in her deuocion and praier, but on hem he saue no thing saue good, notwithstandinge they were welle arraied. And the ermyte told hem, who that arraied hym more to plesse the sight of the worlde thanne God he makithe ioye and gladnesse to the fendes of helle. And the pepille that were there oute of her mynde and turmented, as ye herde before, cried, and pulled euer of her tyre, as thei had ben wode. And so the good ermyte counsailed hem to amende hem, \*and to abide in praier in that chapel .ix. dayes; and so thei dede, and thorough the praier of the holy ermite, whan they had confessed hem, and promessed to God to be deuoute at the masse, and neuer to iangle nor to clatre whanne thei shulde serue God, than the ermite assoiled hem, and they were heled, and come againe into her witte, and thei kepte hem euer after from iangelinge atte Goddes seruice.

He called  
to God, but  
they did not  
heed,

and after  
masse he told  
what he had  
seen,

\* [Fol. 14b.  
col. 1.]

when they  
repented and  
promised to  
serue God  
better.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

And here is an ensauple how no man thorough his  
clateringe shulde desturbe the devine seruice of God.

**Y**Et wille y telle you what befelle atte the masse of the holy  
man, seint Martin of Towres, and as he saide masse there

Saint Martin  
and Saint  
Brice said  
masse together,

and the  
latter  
laughed,

because a  
fiend was  
writing all  
the idle talk  
of the people  
on parch-  
ment, and  
knocked his  
head against  
the wall.

So St. Martin  
warned the  
people of the  
sin of talking  
at masse.

\* [Fol. 14b.  
col. 2.]

halpe hym seint Brice, the whiche was hys clerke and godsone, that after seint Martin was ershebisshope of Towres, the whiche Brice toke up a gret laughinge, and seint Martin perseiued it. And whanne the masse was done, seint Martin asked hym whi he laughed, and he ansuered, that he saw the fende write alle the laughinges that were betwene the women atte the masse, and it happed that the parchemyn that he wrote in was shorte, and he plucked harde to haue made it lengger with his tethe, and it scaped oute of hys mouthe, and hys hede had a gret stroke ayenst the wall, "& that made me to laughe." And whan seint Martin herde hym, he knewe that seint Brice was an holy man. And he preched this to the women, and how it was a gret perille and synne to speke and counsaile of worldly materes atte the masse or atte Goddes \* seruice, and that it were beter not to be there thanne to haue suche langage and clatering. And yet sum clerkes susteinthe that none shulde not speke no manere thing whiles they bene atte masse, and in especial atte the gospelle, nor atte the 'per omnia;' and therefor, doughtres, here is an ensauple how ye shalle holde you humble and deuoute in the chirche, and for no thinge haue no iangelynge with nobody while ye are atte the masse, nor while ye serue God.

## CHAPTER XXX.

Another ensauple y wille telle you of hem that for slouth the lessethe her masse and makithe other to lese her masse.

A knight and  
a lady slept  
so late that  
masse could  
not be said  
at church for  
waiting until  
it was too  
late.

**I** Haue herde of a knight & of a lady that in her youthe delited hem to rise late. And so they used longe, till many tymes that thei loste her masse, and made other of her parisshe to lese it, for the knight was lorde and patron of the chirche, and therfor the preest durst not disobeye hym. And so it happed that on a sonday the knight sent unto the chirche that thei shulde abide hym. And whanne he come, it was passed none, wherfor thei might not that day haue no masse, for euery

man saide it was passed tyme of the day, and therfor thei durst not singe. And so that sonday the knight, the lady, and alle the parisshe was withoute masse, of the whiche the pepille were sori, but thei must needs suffre. And on a night there came on a vision to the person, that he kepte a gret flocke of shepe in a felde there that there grewe no grasse; and he wolde haue ledde hem into a felde there grasse was, \*but he must go whithe hem thorough a streite pathe, and in the pathe he saw a gret blacke swyne and a sowe, horned, that lay ouerthwarte the pathe; and he was so sore aferde of her hornes, that he yode away and fledde with his shepe, withoute pasturinge or fedinge hem. And a uoys saide to hym, "Whi art thou aferde of these horned bestys?" & with that he awoke. And the same night the knight and the lady dremed that thei were become horned swyne and sow, and wolde not let the shepe goo to her pasture nor fedyng. And after hem thought that there come mani blacke hunters, and blake hors, with many blake greyhoundes, and raches; and the houndes were uncoupeled on hem, and chaced and bote hem spitously bi the eeres and thies; and them thought that the chace dured so longe on hem till they were take and slayne. And of this auision, whanne they were awaked, thei were foule afraied; for the auicion come to hem bi two tymes. And the person come to the knightes hous, and he tolde hem his auicyon, and the preest his, of the whiche thei were gretly meruailed, and thaire sweiues were lyche. And the preest saide vnto the knight, "There is hereby in a forest an holy ermyte that canne telle us what this auicion menithe." And than thei yede to hym, and tolde it hym fro point to point, and as it was. And the wise holi man, the whiche was of blessed lyff, expounded and declared her auicion in this wise: "Sir knight, ye & youre wiff are blacke swyne and sowes that kepithe the pathe thorughe the whiche the shepe shulde go to her \*sustenance and fode, that is to mene, that ye ar lorde of the parisshe that ye duell in. And ye haue destroubled the parisshe to here masse and Goddes seruice, the whiche is the feding and the pasture of the body and soule, and for youre rest

And the knight, the lady, and the priest were all warned in dreams.

\* [Fol. 15, col. 1.]

And a hermit explained their dreams,

\* [Fol. 15, col. 2.]

and sleping by day, like swyne, haue made youre neygheboures lese her masse and Goddes seruice ; and the hornes that ye had signifiethe that ye be therfor in dedly synne. And in especialle ye make other to lese the seruice of God, the whiche ye may neuer amende withoute ye suffre therfor gret turment. And therfor the vengeance of the dede is shewed you bi auicion, that ye shalle be tormented, and chaced, and slayn therfor with fendes of helle, withoute amendement. For it were beter to you, that ye lacked to here an hundred masses, thanne ye lette a man to here one or a preest of his deuocion. For the preest most falle into the synne of wrathe, and his parissshenes gone forth to the ale hous or to a tauerne, and thorughe taryeng lese her deuocion. And alle this euell comithe of youre sleuthe and synne, of the whiche ye shalle yelde onis acompte of ; and ye shalle be therfor chaced, tormented, and slayne, and in waye to be dampned, but ye amende it." And thanne the knight was abashed, and asked counsaile what was beste for hym to do. And the holy man counsailed that on thre sondayes he shulde knele on his knees afore alle the parissshenes, and crie hem mercy, and that they wolde forgeue hym his misdede that he had kepte hem so longe a dayes from her masse, and that thei wold praie to God foryeue hym and his wyff, \* and he wolde euer after be one of the furst at the chirche. And thei were shriue of the ermite, and had penaunce of hym, and were chastised that thei dede naught as they were wont. And he and his wyff thanked God of her auicion that he sent hem, that thei might amende hem, And so from that tyme forwarde thei were the furst atte the masse and the laste therfrom. And also the ermite tolde the preest his auicion like as hadde the knight, and that God shulde be dradde and serued afore ani erthely thinge or delite of rest or plesaunce ; wherfor, doughtres, take here ensauple that for youre persones esc that ye make not diuerse peple lese her masse and deuocion, thorughe youre negligence and sleuthe ; for it were beter for you to here no masse thanne to lette other.

that because  
they made  
others to lese  
their masses,

they were  
worse than in  
neglecting  
their own.

\* [Fol. 15b.  
col. 1.]

And they  
were ever  
after the first  
at the mass.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

I wolde ye knew an ensauple of the lady that wolde  
haue alwey a *quarter* of a day to arraie her.

**T**Her was a ladi that duelled fast bi the chirche, that toke  
every day so longe tyme to make her redy that it made  
wery and angri the person of the chirche and the parissshenes to  
abide after her. And she happed to abide so longe on a sonday  
that it was fer dayes, and euery man said to other, "This day we  
trow shalle not this lady be kemed, and arraied;" and sum of  
hem cursed her, and saide, "The deuelle arraye her onis, and be  
her merour, for because she makithe us euery day in use and to  
abide after her." And as God wolde shew for ensauple, atte  
the same tyme and houre as she loked in a mirrour, in stede of \*the  
mirrour, the deuelle turned to her his ars, the whiche was so  
foule and orible that for ferde she was wode and oute of her  
mynde, and was so sike longe; and atte the laste God sent her  
her witte; & she was chastised, and wolde no more make  
folke to mouse after her, but wolde be sonner arraied and atte  
the churche thanne ani other. And she thanked God that he  
had chastised her so that she might amende her: and therfor  
here is an ensauple that no body shulde take so long leyser to  
arraie them that thei lese her masse and Goddes scruiice, and  
make other also to lese it.

A lady took  
so long to  
array her,  
and kept the  
people wait-  
ing for mass,

that they  
cursed her;

\* [Fol. 15b.  
col. 2.]  
and the devil  
appeared to  
her in her  
glass, and  
frightened  
her so that  
she would no  
more keep  
folks waiting,

and she thank-  
ed God He  
had chastised  
her that she  
might amend.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

Now y wille telle you an ensauple on this matere of  
an holy lady that loued well God and his seruice.

**H**It happed her on a day that she herde no masse, she wolde  
not that day ete flesshe nor fysshe; & yet she wolde  
be fulls of sorow in hert; and hit happed on a day her chapelein  
was sike that he might not synge, wherthorough she must go  
home withoute masse. And she yede wak oute her place crieng

An example  
of a holy lady  
that loved  
well God and  
His service.

When she  
heard no  
mass, she  
would eat no  
flesh nor fish.  
Her chaplain  
being sick,  
she could  
have no mass,



and cried on  
God,

who sent her  
two friars.

She asked one  
of them to  
say masse for  
her.

The youngest  
said the masse,

and when he  
broke the

\* [Fol. 16,  
col. 1.]

host in 3  
parts, the  
elder friar  
saw one of  
them leap  
into the  
lady's mouth.

The young  
friar trembled  
for fear,  
and then  
thanked God  
for the mira-  
cle.

God shewed  
his love for  
them who  
desire to serve  
Him.

on God, saieng these wordes, "Lord, forgete not purueie me of thin holy seruice, thoughē this chapelein be syke :." and as she saide these wordes she saw comyng towards her two freres, of the whiche she was gladdē, and asked hem yef the wolde saye her masse ; and thei ansuered her, yee, if her lyked. And she praied one of hem shulde go to. And she thanked God of her coming. And so the yonggest of the freres yede to masse. And as he was afore the Agnus Dei, the olde frere loked on hym how he brake the oste in the .iiij. parties. And he sawe one of the parties lepe \* into the good ladies mouthe in manere of a gret clerenesse or a light ; and the frere that was atte the masse loked aboute hym where the .iiij. parte of the oste was becomin, and tremeled for ferde, and his felowe come to hym & saide, "Be not aferde, for that ye seke is in the good ladies mouthe." And thanne he helde hym content, and thanked God of that miracle. & thus it happed the lady that loued so moche the seruice of God. And therfor here is an ensauple to love Goddes seruice. God loueth hym, as he shewed unto this good lady apertely that had gret desire to serue hym and to see hym, as ye haue herde here afore.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

An example  
of a countess  
that every day  
heard three  
masses.

I wolde ye herde an ensauple of a countesse that  
euery day wolde here thre masses.

One of her  
chaplains  
hurt himself,  
and could not  
sing.

She prayed to  
God,  
who sent her  
a saint,  
who after-  
wards  
vanished.

She humbly  
thanked God.

AND as she yode a pilgrimage, one of her chapeleinez felle of his horse and hurte hym self in such wise that he might not singe, and the ladi was fulle of sorugh that she shulde lacke one of her masses. And as she made deuoutly her praiers to God, he sent her a seint in stede of a preest to saie her a masse ; but whanne he had songe and done of his vestementys, there wost no body where he become. And thanne the ladi wist that it was Goddes sonde, of the which she thanked hym humbely. And here is a good ensauple how God purueieth for hym that louithe hym, and his seruice. And y trowe there be now mani

women that passithe a dayes withe feuer masses thanne .iiij., and that it suffisithe hem to here one, for her deuocion is so litelle in the seruice of God ; for who that louithe hym and dredithe hym, he wille ofte see God and here his holy seruice. And he that dothe contrarie, wol passe lightly, as diuerse do now a dayes, that haue more delite to plesse the worlde and the flesshe thanne God.

There are many women now who hear less than three masses.

\* [Fol. 16, col. 2.]

Many now-a-days have more delight to please the world than God.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

I wol telle you an ensauple of a yong lady that had her herte moche on the worlde.

An example of a young lady whose heart was on the world.

**A**Nd there was a squier that loued her, and she hym. And for because that she might haue beter leiser to speke with hym, she made her husbonde to understond that she had uowed in diuerse pilgrimages ; and her husbonde, as he that thought none euell, and wolde not displese her, suffered and helde hym content that she shule go whedir her lust. And it happed that she and the squier yede a pilgrimage to a place that was of oure lady. And thei thought they were wel atte ease, that they might haue her foly speche and communication togedre, in whyche they delited hem more thanne to saie praieres or seruice to God, or to haue ani deuocion in her pilgrimage. And it happed thei were atte the masse, and thorough the temptacion of the deuelle they delited hem atte the masse in lokyng, and in makinge signes, eueriche to other, of love and iapes, more thanne they delited hem in Goddes seruice, or to saie deuoutely her matenes or praieres. And God, that wolde shewe his miracle that thei dede euell, sent the ladi suche a sodein sikenesse that she swalt there she stode, and that no man wost whedir she shulde leue or deye. And she \*was taken anone in armes, and born into the towne as a dede woman ; and in thre dayes after she neuer ete mete nor drinke. And so her frendes and her husbonde were sent for, the whiche, whanne they come, made moche sorugh that this auenture was falle on her ; for thei wost

She was in love with a squire,

and went on a pilgrimage with the squire,

and delighted in spech together rather than in prayers.

\* [Fol. 16b. 30.] And at the mass

she was taken with sickness

\* [Fol. 16b. col. 1.] and carried home ;

and in a  
trance her  
father and  
mother came  
to her,

and told her  
to love none  
but her  
husband.

And she saw  
a pit full of  
fire,

but for her  
charity in  
clothing  
priests she  
was kept  
from it ;

\* [Fol. 166.  
col. 2.]  
and when she  
awoke,

she sent for a  
priest,

who told her  
what her  
vision meant :

that she  
should love  
her husband,

not whedir she shuld liue or deye. But as she laye in a traunce that .iiij. dayes her thought she sawe her fader and moder ; and her moder shewed her pappes and brestis, saieng, "Faire doughter, loue and worship youre husbonde that God and the churche haue geuen you, and aboue al erthely men, and loue hym lyke as ye haue loued these brestis, the whiche hathe norissed you."

And her thought that her fader asked her, "Whi loue ye or haue more plesinge to ani man than to youre husbonde?" And he saide, "Doughter, loke what sight is besydez you." And he saide, "But ye amende you, ye are like to falle in the fyre."

Thanne she loked besides her, and she sawe a depe wellle full of the fire of helle, and she was allemost falle therin. Of the whiche auicion and sight she was foule afraied. And thanne her fader and her moder shewed her an hundred preestis that she had clothed in white for the loue of the soules of her fader and moder. And her fader and her moder thanked her therfor. And after she thought that she saw the ymage of oure ladi holdinge in her honde a cote and a smocke, and saide to her, "This cote and smocke shal kepe the from fallynge into that wellle of fire, notwithstandinge thou hast defouled myn hous."

And in that afray \*she awoke of her traunce and auicion, and toke up a gret sighe ; and thanne her husbonde and frendes were glad that she was not dede. And the lady was abaissed of her sweuene and auicion, and asked a preest what best was for her to do ; and he dede seche her a man of holy lyff that wered the hayr, that was a gret clerk, and a man of holy religion ; and she was shreue to hym, and tolde hym alle her auicyon, and her fere that she hadde of the wellle ; and tolde hym alle her synne and youthe. And the holy man declared her auicion, and saide, "Ye are as moche beholde to God and to hys blessed moder, that wille not that youre soule be lost, nor dampned, but a shewed you before the perelle for youre saluation. Furst, God hathe sheued you youre fader and youre moder, and that youre moder saide, 'doughter, loue and worship youre husbonde as ye haue loved these brestis that have norissed you ;' that is to menyng that ye shulde loue and doute youre husbonde, as ye

loued youre moderes brest whanne ye were norissshed therof. For the child louthe of all thinge the pappe, for the suetnesse of the melke of the whiche he takithe his norissshinge and weringe ; and so aught eueri good woman do after Goddes lawe, to loue her husbonde aboue all other loues, and to forsake worldely loues that be unlesfull. For oure Lorde saithe with his mouthe that woman shulde leue fader, moder, brother, and suster, for her husbonde. For they are not diuerse, but two flessches that God hathe ioyned in one, and that no man shulde putte betwene hem no \*thinge that might seuer the loue that God and the churche hathe ioyned in hem. Yet youre moder saide you that ye toke youre norissshinge and waxing of the suetnesse of the milke, the whiche signifieth the swetnesse that shulde be in trew mariage, and grace with loue of God. And after that, youre fader saide, whi take ye ani man more loue and pleasaunce thanne youre husbonde ? and see ye that brenninge welles of the fire of helle that is beside you, in the whiche ye ar lik to falle ? that signifieth that an ye loue ani other than youre husbonde, or ani other dele withe you, sauf he only, ye shalle falle into the welles, and be broiled and brent, and sinke in the pitte of helle, euer to be there amonge the deuiles, for the delite of that euel pleasaunce that ye haue hadde ayenst Goddes lawe. And therfor, sen ye haue sene the fire of helle veniaunce, and the punicion that ye most suffre for that fals delite yef ye do it, leue it. And after youre moder shewed you the white preestes, and saide that ye had clothed hem, and they thanked you ; that signifieth that ye had made mani preestes reuest hem, and synge masses for thaire soules ; wherof thei dede thanke you ; and certaine lyke as ye praie for her soules and other that bene dede, so praie thay for you ; and bethe sori whanne thei seithe ani that dothe for hem stondynge in way of dampnacion, as ye may see, thei were sori of the temptacion that ye hadde, and that ye stode in waye like to be loste, and therfor thei come to socour you, for the good dedes and masses, praiers and almesse, that ye hadde don \*for hem. After ye sawe the ymage of oure ladi that in her honde helde a cote and a smocke, and saide to you that this

and live after  
God's law :

\* [Fol. 17,  
col. 1.]  
and that the  
sweetness of  
marriage  
should be as  
the sweetness  
of mother's  
milk :

that the  
burning well  
of fire signi-  
fied that if  
she loved any  
other man,  
she should  
fall into hell  
as a punish-  
ment for the  
evil pleasure,  
and warns  
her to leave  
her sin.

That the  
vision of  
priests signi-  
fied that her  
support of  
priests and of  
masses for the  
souls of the  
dead had  
gained her  
the guardian-  
ship of their  
spirits :

\* [Fol. 17,  
col. 2.]  
that the  
image of Our

Lady signified  
that her  
charity in  
clothing the  
poor had  
gained her  
forgiveness :

that all who  
do evil in  
holy places  
scorn God ;

that God sent  
her sickness  
to shew her  
her sin ;  
but her Lady  
saved her for  
her charity :

and that she  
should amend  
her life  
\* [fol. 175.  
col. 1.]  
and thank  
God for the  
warning.

Lastly, he  
reminds her  
that she was  
sworn to God  
and to her  
husband.

And the lady  
recovered,  
and thanked  
God

shalle saue you from fallynge in the welle, notwithstandinge ye haue fouled myn hous, that is to saye that ye had ben in her chirche more to haue plesaunce in synfulle dedes thanne for the plesaunce of her thenkinge, and hauinge luxurious lokes, countenaunces, and signes in her chirche atte the masse. And there the uoys of oure ladi saide ye hadde fouled the chirche. Alle thei that gone on pilgrimage to a place for foul plesaunce more thanne deuocion of the place that thei go to, and couerithe thaire goinge with seruice of God, fowlithe and scornithe God and oure ladi, and the place that thei goo to, as dede the squier whanne he come to that place, and that ye hadde more plesaunce in hym thanne ye hadde of the plesaunce of God, or on the pilgrimage that ye yede to. And of that misdede God wolde shew that ye had failed in, and made you therfor suffre that payne and euell that ye haue hadde. And that oure ladi wolde haue you saued for a cote and a smocke that ye gaue to too pore women in the worshipec of God and her, the whiche as as the uoys saide hathe saued you, that is to saye, the almesse dede that ye dede hathe kepte you from fallynge in the fyre of helle ; that is to mene that youre auicyon and this fortune that ye haue bene inne, and that ye haue bene kept bi oure lady forto not falle in synne *with* the squier as ye had thought. Thinke this is an exauple and awarninge forto amende you that ye were not dampned, nor lost. And therfor thanke \* God hertely, and amende you bi tyme of youre errour and foly. And ye aught hennys forward kepe you welle from falling in suche perille to lese youre soule, and into horrible synne, as to be in wille to breke youre mariage, the whiche God hathe made hym self to holde hole and to be kepte. And also ye are suoren to God and to youre husbonde atte the chirche dore afore witnesse that ye shalle neuer breke it while ye leue togedre. And yef ye do, ye are shamed and falsly forsworn, and not worthi neuer to come in compani of goode women." And thus the good holy man shewed her and declared her auicion that she mette of, and taught her to do welle. And so the ladi was hole, and thanked God that she was saued from synne, and from her foul delite and plesaunce ; and after that

she loste alle her foly, and was a good woman. And it happed that, half a yeere after that, the squier come from a uiage that he hadde ben atte, fresshe and iolyly beseen, and he beganne to borde and play with the lady with suche langage as he was wont to use to her ; and sayd, "Lady, what lyff is this ? haue y loste the ioy and the plesaunce that y hadde in you, that we shulde haue togedere so moche sportis and mirthis ?" And she answered hym "Alle that tyme ys passed, for y wille neuer haue suche plesaunce ; nor y wille neuer loue no man saue myn husbonde." And thanne she tolde the squier alle that had be-  
happed her, notwithstandinge he had hoped to haue turned her. But she was so afermed in goodnesse, that it wolde not be, and thanne he lefte her. And after he tolde \* to diuerse men the goodnesse and the stedfastnesse of her ; and after he and alle other preised her and worshiped her the more. And therfor here is an exauple that no body shulde go in holy pilgimages for to fulfelle no foly, plesaunce, nor the worlde, nor flesshely delite. But thei shulde go enterly with herte to serue God ; and also that it is good to praie for fader and moder, and for other frendes that bene dede, for thei impetrithe grace for them that be alyue. And also it is good to yeue almesse, as ye haue herde before.

that she was saved, and became a good woman. In half a year the squire came back from a voyage, and began to talk to the ladyas before, and asked her why she was changed.

She replied, she would in future love no man but her husband, and told him all that had happened to her ;

\* [fol. 17b. col. 2.] and all men praised her.

And this is an example that no one should seek worldly pleasures in holy places, and that it is good to pray for the dead, and to give alms.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

And yet I wille telle you an other ensauple, what happed in a chirche that was called Our Lady of Beaulyon.

What happened in a church.

Hit happed in a chirche on an euen of oure lady, one that was called Pers Leuard, whiche was sergeaunt of Candee, on the night delt flesshely with a woman on an auuter ; and God of his gret might wolde shewe that they dede euelle, tyed hem fast togedre that night and the morw alle day, in alle the sighte of the pepille that come thedir unto the towne ; and all the contre there about come downe and sawe them. And thei might neuer parte, but were fast like a dogge and a bitche togedre, that night

One Pers Leuard, a sergeant, dealt with a woman in church ; and they were by a miracle joined together all day, and all the people came to see them.

On the morrow all the people made a procession, and prayed for them, when they were separated. And when the church was again halowed, \* [Fol. 18, col. 1.] they were made to do penance therein.

and the morw alle day, unto the tyme that the pepille yode a procession about for them to pray to God that that orible sight might be ended and hidde. And atte the last, whanne it was night, thei departed. And after the chirche was halowed or euer there were saide therein ani masse. And they that dede the dede were ioyned to penaunce, to go naked afore the procession thre \* Sondayes, beting hem self [and] recordyng her synne tofore the pepille. And therfor here is an ensauple that no body shulde do no suche filthe in the chirche, but kepe it clene and worshipe God there inne.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Another and similar example.

Yet wolle y telle you an other ensauple upon this matere, that befelle in the parties of Peytow not thre yeere sethe.

In an abbey in Poitou a monk named Pygreet was found with a woman in the same posture;

There was an abbey in Peytow called Chimefere, the whiche abbey was fortifyed for werres; and the prioure of that abbey had a monke there, that was his neuw, that hight Pigreet, the whiche atte a tyme might not be founde; and he was lost. And atte the laste thei fonde hym in a corner of the chirche byhinde a \* on a woman, and they might not part that one from that other. And than alle folke come thedir to see hem; of the whiche sight the sely monke was sore ashamed of and fulle of sorw, and so was his uncle and alle other monkes. And after, whanne it was the wille of God, thei parted, and the monke Pygreet went and fledde away oute of the abbey for shame. And therfor here is an ensauple that no body shulde do that orible synne of the delyte of the flesshe in the chirche, nor to speke nor to make countenaunce nor lokes of foly loue there inne, but yef it were of loue of mariage. For as one of the gospelle saithe that God entred into the chirche, the whiche was atte that tyme called the temple, and he fonde that they solde there inne marchaundises; and he made uoyde oute alle they that solde ani thinge therin, and saide that \* the hous of

and all people came to see them,

and the monk fled away for shame.

This is an example that no one should seek worldly pleasures in a church:

for God went to the Temple, turned out all who sold things there,

\* [Fol. 18, col. 2.]

God shulde be kepte clene, and shulde serue to praie and to make orisonnes inne; and that it was none hous to make marchaundise and to do synne in. And therfor, to conferme this that is afore, oure Lorde hathe shewed his myracles in these two chirches, how it displesed hym that his holy place was fouled, the whiche was ordeined of clenness to serue hym, that is the chirche.

and said it should be a house of prayer, and not of merchandise; and God by these two miracles shewed his displeasure at his church being "fouled."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### [Of Bad Examples.]

And therfor, doughtres, thei that seethe the good and takithe the euell, by reson they shulle repent hem, y saie for there is mani euell ensaumples in the worlde, and there be mani that takithe hem souner thanne the good ensaumples. And thei that done so, done ayenst nature, and gone oute of the right way, and ayenst the comaundement of God, that alle good and sauacion techithe, and geuith us wretin the whiche we shulde holde, the whiche we kepe febely. For we see that the most of the worlde gouernithe hem after the delite of the flesshe and the veyne glorie of the worlde, as sum that be prowde of her science, richesse, and her birthe; and there be other that be enuious to see other in gretter degre thanne they; and other that be fulle of yre and rancour; and other fulle of hote and brennyng lechery, enflamed unmesurably like wolves, or other wylde beestis; and other that be lykerous of moche mete and drinke, takyng unresonably therof; and other that euer are in couetise of that is not heres; and other that ben bawdes and theues, usureres, bariters, ouerthwarteres and lyers, traytours and fals of her worde, \* and bakbyters; and other that be slowe that wylle do no good to hem selff ne to none other. And these manere of men sheuith that they be the children of a fals maisteris doctrine, the whiche is the deuille of helle, that counsailethe, temptithe, and gouernithe hem, and the deuille holdithe hem bounde in his seruice till thei be unbounde by confession; and men of these maners there be now a dayes to mani, of the whiche it is the more pitee.

Many follow evil examples rather than good,

going out of the right way, and against the commandments of God. Most people seek the pleasures and vain glories of the world, being proud, envious,

angry, or lecherous, like beasts.

Others are gluttonous, covetous, usurers, liars, and backbiters.

\* [Fol. 185. col. 1.]

Some are no good either to themselves or to others.

All these are the children of a false master, the devil, who holdeth them bound, until they are unbound by confession.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

## [Of Good Examples.]

But others  
have love of  
God,

and fight  
against  
temptation ;

and are  
temperate

and content.

Many men  
for anger beat  
themselves  
with their  
own staff.

God blesseth  
the meek and  
humble,

and is the  
Father of  
those who  
keep His com-  
mandments.

\* [Fol. 18b.  
col. 2.]

He will keep  
and save all  
who love and  
dread Him.  
The Bible  
gives us ex-  
amples of  
good women

and of evil  
women.

And there be other be wyse, that haue her herte and hope of God. And for the loue and fere that thei haue in hym, thei kepe hem clene and fytithe ayenst temptaciones, and the braydes of the fyre of lecherye, and kepithe hem suerly withoute delycious metes, for the flesshe is tempted by delycious metes and drinkes, the whiche bene leteres and kindelers of the brondes of lecherye ; and other that haue grace to thenke that they haue suffisaunce, and that is ayenst couetise. And there be other that haue free hert, true and iuste, and be not riotous ; for who that sekith the ryot gladly, he metithe therewith, for many men for anger betithe hym selff with his owne staffe, and sekith hym sorw from day to day. And God blessithe in the gospelle the meke and the humble hert. And all these men that kepithe hem selff clene, and in the loue and drede of God, and of his neighboures, sheuithe wellø who is her fader, and that is God the fader, of the whiche they kepe his comaundementis as holy chirche techithe hem. And they haue free hert to witholde good ensaumples of lyff, and ioye perdurable, and of saluation. And therfor, faire daughters, haue night and day youre hertes to hym \* and loue hym, and drede hym, and he wille kepe you and saue you from perille and temptaciones. And therfor, my faire daughters, y wille shewe you and declare you by this boke the good ladyes that God preisithe in the Bybille, and for thaire holy lyff shal euer be praised, and therfor takithe ensaumples to lyue clenly and honestly as thei dede. And also y wille declare you sum euellø women that were diuerse and cruelle, the whiche made and hadde euellø ende, to that entent that ye may take hede by hem to kepe you from the euellø, that ye falle not inne.

## CHAPTER XXXIX—XLVI.

## [The Example of Eve.]

The first  
example is  
Eve, through

The furst ensaumples of ewelle and synne, wherethrough the dethe y entered in to this worlde, hit come of Eue, oure furst

moder, that lytelle kept the comaundement of God, nor toke none hede of the worshippe that God haþe sette her inne. For God had made her lady of alle thinges under heuene bering lyff on erthe, and that alle thinges shulde obeye atte her wyll. And yef she hadde not falle in the synne to breke the comaundement of God, there hadde be no fische in water, beest on erthe, bridde in the eyre, but they shulde haue bene alle in thaire obeysaunce to haue demened hem atte her lust withoute ani obstacle. And she shulde haue brought forthe her children withoute payne or perille. And she shulde neuer haue thrust, nor hunger, colde, hete, nor trauayle, siknesse, heuynesse in herte, nor worldly dethe, nor no water shulde drenche her, nor fyre brenne her, nor no thinge hurt her. And therfor takithe hede how one synne puttithe her oute of so highe a worshiþe, ease, and blisse of loue into this ser\*uage and bondage as we be in, for she lost alle worshiþe, richesse, ese, and blysse, and the obeisaunce of alle thinges, for the sinne of the disobeyaunce. Now doughtres take hede wherinne the furste woman synned, to that intent that ye may be ware thereof by good doctrines and ensamples. And one of furst causes of synne that Eue dede, was for she toke aqueintaunce lightly of the serpent, and herkeninge to her langage, that made her falle in speche with her, the whiche she dede of mys. For atte the furst she shulde not haue take no aqueintaunce nor to haue herkened to her speche, and thanne she hadde scomfit the serpent atte the furst. Ande therfor her lewde aqueintaunce and herkenynge dede harme. And therfor, faire doughtres, it is not good to herkyn and take sodeyne acqueintaunce that hathe the herte of faire speche, for sum tyme her speche is deseyuable and venomous, by the whiche ye might cache grete blame and shame. And so the serpent auised her tyme, whanne Eue was from her husbonde alone, to that entent that she might haue beter leyser to shewe and to saye to her false deseiuable langage. And therfor, doughtres, it is not good to a woman to be founde alone with a man, but yef it be with her husbonde. But y saie not but that women shulde do worshiþe to hem that is worthi to haue it.

whom death entered the world,

whom God made lady of all things.

If she had not broken God's commandments, all fishes, beasts, and birds would have been obedient to her,

and she would have had neither pain, peril, thirst, hunger, sickness, nor death.

And one sin deprived her of this "bias of love."

\* [Fol. 19, col. 1.]

Therefore take heed wherein she sinned.

One of the first causes of her fall was listening to the serpent.

Therefore it is not good to make acquaintance suddenly with any of "fair speech."

The serpent watched when Eve was away from her husband, thereby shewing it is not good for a woman to be alone with any man but her husband.

\*[Fol. 19,  
col. 2.]

The second  
folly of Eve  
was to talk  
with the  
serpent,

for the answer  
belonged to  
her husband  
and not to  
her ;

therefore  
women  
should not  
answer with-  
out asking  
their  
husbands.

For example,  
a lady, when  
a prince made  
love to her,  
told him she  
would ask  
her husband  
what answer  
she should  
give him ;

and thus it  
got her much  
worship of all  
in the land.

The third  
folly of Eve  
was to think  
wrong of  
God's com-  
mand ;

\*[Fol. 19b.  
col. 1.]

for she tolde  
the devil  
"perad-  
venture they  
should die;"  
but God did  
not say  
"perad-  
venture."

And also a woman puttethe her worships in balance to ansuere and speke to moche ; for one worde drauithe an other in, and thanne there may scape sum worde that after may turne to harme, and she may be scorned and mocked therfor. For the \*secounde folly that Eue dede was, for she answered to lightly withoute bethenkinge her, whanne the deuell in the liknesse of a serpent asked why she and her husbonde ete not of the fruit of the tree of lyff as they ete of the other fruites, and she, withoute counsaile of her husbonde, helde with hym talkinge, whiche turned her to myscheef that she answered, for the ansuere longed to her husbonde, and not to her, to deuise what fruit they shulde ete. And therfor she might haue saide, "Aske myn husbonde that questyon and not me," and thus she might haue discharged her of her ansuere. And therfor, faire doughtres, takithe ensauple yef any requere you of folly of ani thinge that touchithe youre worshippe, ye may saye ye wille wete of youre husbonde, what he wille saye that ye ansuere hym. And y wolde that ye knew the ensauple of a lady that the prince of Aquile required of folly loue, the whiche, whanne he hadde alle praied, answered that she wolde wete her husbondes wille, and geue hym an ansuere. And he saw that, and lete her be, and neuer spake more to her of that matere. And the prince tolde to alle the peple that she was one of the perfit good women of alle hys londe ; and thus the lady gate her moche worships that she answered so the prince. And so aught eueri good woman to lete her husbonde ansuere and not they. The thridde folly that Eue dede was whan she bethought her not aright of the defence that God had made to her husbonde and her. For God had saide hem, yef that they ete of the fruit, that they shulde \*deye ; and therfor, whanne she answered and tolde not the serpent the plaine trouthe, but saide "yef we ete of this fruite peraventure we shulle deye," and thus she putte condicion in her ansuere, but oure Lorde putte there inne no condicion, nor no peraventure. But that worde that she saide, peraventure, made the deuell to take fote to tempte her, and enharded hym to speke to her, as they that herken men whanne

they praie hem of foly ; for her herkeninge they yeue hem corage to speke to hem further, as Eue herkened the fende that saide, "ye may wel ete therof, and ye shalle not deye, but ye shalle be as faire as Good, and ye shalle knowe bothe good and euell ; and the cause is that he hathe defended you the etynge of the fruit is for ye shulde not be as faire, clere, shyning, bright, puissaunt, and as mighti as he." And thus Eue wende he had saide sothe, and leued hym for couetise and faire speche. And so done these folisshe women, that beleuithe these fals flateres and iangelers that counsailithe hem to foly with her faire speche, and behest her the whiche they holde not, notwithstandinge sum tyme they makithe hem with thaire faire speche consent to foly delyte, and after they finde hemself deseyued, for whanne they haue had her wille, they leue hem shamed and defamed shamefully. The fourthe foly of Eue was her foly sight, and lokyng that she lyst on the tree and fruit of lyff, the whiche God had defended her, the whiche fruit her thought faire and delycious ; and thorughe her light loke she desired and was tempted to ete therof. And thus for her lewde \*and light lokinge she felle into foule plesaunce and synne. And therfor it is gret perill to loke lyghtly ; for the wise man saithe that the most enemy that a man hathe is the sight of the yee, the whiche haue deceyued mani with fals leude lokinge ; for there is mani that lokithe soberly, stedfastly, and mildely in her fals lokes, that women weuen that thei be fulle of thought for distresse of loue, and it is done but to make a fals semblaunt to deseyue hem. And therfor, doughtres, here is an ensauple to be ware of lokes, for many a tyme folke be deceiued thereby. For whanne the deuelle of helle findithe folke togederes with suche folisshe fals lokes, he temptithe and enflamithe, and makithe hem to falle in the foule orible synne of lechery, thorughe whiche they lese bothe body and soule. And so ye may see that this synne comithe of the lewde lokinge, of the whiche y wolde ye knew the ensauple of king Dauid, that for a leude loke that he kiste on Barsaba, Vriis wyff, he felle into auowtry and fornicacion with her ; and after he felle into man slaughter, for he made slee her

And the devil said "ye shall not die,

but be good, and wise,

and as mighty as God."

Thus do foolish women who believe false flatterers,

and after find themselves deceived, and left to shame.

The fourth folly of Eve was to look longingly on the tree,

\* [Fol. 19b. col. 2.]

and by looking fell into sin.

This is an example to beware of looks, with which the devil tempteth ;

for the sin of lechery cometh of lewd looking ;

of which king David is an example ; for he fell into fornication and manslaughter,

husbonde Vri ; for the which God toke gret wraithe and uen-  
geaunce on hym and his pepille, and alle the cause of the  
begynninge was of a leude loke, as hit felle by Eue, that  
thorughe her loke she felle into the foule and orible synne to  
breke Goddes comaundement, thorughe the whiche alle the  
worlde and her offspring was dede, and lost, and dampned.  
And therfor, doughtres, be ware of youre lokes, whereon ye  
sette hem stedfastly. The fifthe foly of Eue was whanne she  
touched the fruyte \*that God had defended, for the whiche she  
had be beter that she hadde hadde none hondes. It is a gret  
perille after ye loke, for whanne that two vices be sette one  
euelle delite, gladly they bringe her maister into temptacion.  
And therfor the wise man saithe that no thinge shulde be  
touched that may hurte the soul ; for leude touchinge and  
handelyng sterithe and chafithe the flesshe and the body, and  
blindithe reson that shulde gouerne alle, and makithe thanne  
folke falle into orible synne of luxurie. And the wise man  
saithe that a man shulde loke on his hondes and bethenke  
hym thries or he touched ani thing, to that entent that he  
shulde know that he wolde not touche no thinge that shulde  
stere hym to synne ; for the touchinge with honde and mouthe,  
as kessinge, sterithe the blode and trobelithe the drede of God  
and the worshype of this worlde. And therfor moche synne and  
foly is falle by touchinge and handelinge, as it felle by Eue,  
oure furst moder, that touched the fruit of lyff. The sixte  
foly that Eue dede was she ete the fruit the whiche God had  
defended her ; and for that dede we were deliuered alle to the  
payne of dethe of helle, and straunged from gret ioye and blisse.  
For the whiche folys dede, there is falle so moche sorw, payne,  
and woo, as ye may see by holy writte ; and how God hathe  
and wille ponisshe them that etithe suche delycious metes and  
drinkes, with the whiche the[y] norisshe the flesshe and the  
caryonne of the body, thorughe the whiche also is gendered ese,  
reste, and hete, and steringe of the foule delite of lechery and  
other synnes. Whi takithe thei not hede \*of Goddes powere  
pepille that deyethe for hunger, thruste, and colde, of the

and all from  
a lewd look.

Through  
Eve's looking  
all the world  
was lost.  
Therefore  
beware on  
what ye look.  
The fiftth folly  
\* [Fol. 20.  
col. 1.]  
of Eve was  
touching the  
fruit ;

therefore no-  
thing should  
be touched  
that may  
hurt the soul.

A man should  
bethink him  
thrice before  
he touches  
anything,

for much sin  
and folly  
comes from  
touching and  
handling.  
The sixth  
folly of Eve  
was eating the  
fruit which  
God had for-  
bidden her.

\* [Fol 20,  
col. 2.]

which God wille axse hem acompte at the dredfulle day. And wetithe welle that synne is not alle in moche etinge, but in the delite of sauour of the mete. And as the wyse saithe, the dethe lyethe under the delites, as the fysshe that takithe his bayte upon an hoke. And he wenithe no thinge in it but mete, and it is an hoke whiche takithe hym, and sleithe hym, and is his dethe. And as the venym and poysum is yeuen under coloure of mete and drinke, the whiche sleithe the man; and thorughe the sauour that is take of delite of the delicious metes the soule is perissshed and slayne by the body, as the delite of the apille slow Eue oure furst moder, and turned to gret synne; as furste to herken, and to take sodenly acquaintance, and to ansuere, and after the lokinge and beholdinge, and thanne touchinge, and cussinge and saweringe made of fals delite that Eue dede to ete the apille. The seuenthe foly of Eue was for because that she beleued not that God saide to her that she shulde deye yef that she ete of the fruit of lyff, but he sayde not that she shulde deye anone bodely dethe, but saide that she shulde deye. And so dede she furst that was that disobeyed to God and felle in his yre and indygnacioun. And after she deyed bodely dethe, that was whan she had be longe in trauaile, and had suffered mani sorwes and paynes, and was of euell atte ease in this worlde, as God had promised her. And atte the laste, after her dethe, she descended into helle, and there she and her husbonde \*and all thaire lyff was in prison unto the tyme that God deied on the crosse, that was .V. thousande yere and more betwene. And thanne God deliuered hem, and thei that hadde serued hym in the olde lawe, and toke oute the good and lefte the euell, and toke the corne and lefte the straw to be brent. Alas! whi thenke not they that slepithe euer in synne to this day to amende hem, not hope lyke a fole euer to lyue, and to abide to his last ende to amende hym? And may not they see the dethe that neighed hem from day to day, as dothe the thief that comithe in atte the dore on the backe half, and robithe, and sleithe, and gothe his way, and no man wote whanne he comithe ayen; and after, the thief, whanne he hathe

Death lieth under the delight of eating, as to the fish that taketh his bait on a hook,

and the soul is slain by the body.

The seventh folly of Eve was not believing what God said to her.

After her death she descended into  
[\* Fol. 20b. col. 1.]

hell, and was in prison with her husband until the time of Christ's death, when they were delivered, with all who had served God in the old time. Why do not sinful people think to amend their lives at once, and not hope to live for ever?

A robber  
cometh and  
goeth until he  
be "spied"  
and taken ;

so the sinner  
goeth and  
cometh in  
pleasure and  
sin until his  
death.

A woman  
should live on  
God's com-  
mandments.

\* [Fol. 20b.  
col. 2.]

The eighth  
folly of Eve  
was giving the  
apple to her  
husband ;

therefore a  
woman ought  
to beware  
what counsel  
she gives her  
husband,  
and a man  
should con-  
sider what  
his wife's  
counsel leads  
to ;

for a man was  
slain through  
following his  
wife's counsel.

All good  
women should  
bethink them  
that their  
counsel lead  
not their

robbed, he gothe and comithe till he be spied, and thanne is take and stroyed. And so farithe it by the synners that euer lyuen in synne from day to day till the dethe takithe hem, and thanne they knowe her synnes, as the theef dothe that can not kepe hym from goyng and comyng, and delite hem in thifthe till thei be taken and putte to dethe. And so it farithe by the synner that gothe ofte to and from in his foule plesaunce, and delited that his synne is aperceyued, knowe, and wist so fer forthe that thei lese her worships, and be shamed and defamed, bothe of God and of alle the worlde. And therfor a woman shulde leue on Goddes comaundementis, and do no thinge that he hathe defended, that is to saye that no man nor woman shulde do no dedly synne, nor to breke her ma\*riage, nor to do none avoutri, and eueri bodi aught to beleue that it is Goddes biddinge. For who dothe it not withoute amendement thei be dampned in the brenninge fyre of helle amonge the deueles withoute mercy. The .viij. foly that Eue dede was whanne she gaue her husbonde the apille to ete, and praied and counselled hym to ete therof as she dede. And he toke and ete thereof, for he wolde not disobeie her, and therfor thei were bothe dampned, and there lyue to be amonge the deuelles of helle in prison and pain. And therfor a woman aught to be ware what she counsailethe her husbonde, and that she bethenke her yef it be good or euell what ende her counsaile may turne. And also a man aught not so moche to enclyne to his wyff but that he shulde take hede whedir it were perelle to do her counsaile or not. For there be many women that rechin neuer what fallithe of her counsaile so thaire wille be fulfilled. For y know a man that loued his wiff, and dede after her counsaile, for the whiche made hym be slayne for his doing after her, the whiche was the more harme ; wherfor it had be beter that he had hadde lasse drede and beleued her, as Adam that beleued his wyff, the whiche was dethe and undoying to hym and her, and to us alle. And therfor alle good women aught to bethenke hem, for any foluyng of her wylle, what counsaile they geue to her husbondes, that it turne not

after hem and her husbondes to harme and shame. For and she be wyse, she \*aught to mesure her thought whedir it might turne to good or euell; for she must haue parte with her husbonde bothe of good and euell that fallithe, and therfor, for loue or hate that she migh haue to ani body, she aught be ware what she counsailethe hym, as Eue dede that wolde do euell, that she shulde not haue counsailed her husbonde to do euell. And therfor, here is an ensauple; yef a body wille not don good hym self, as fastinge and other good dedes, thei shulde not counsaile nor enhorte an other to do euell and synne; for, yef thei do, they are parteners in the synne that they counsaile; that is to saye, thei takithe and turnithe folke from deuocion, fastinge, almesse, pilgrymage, shewing good ensauple to do welle, and to fulfelle Goddes comaundementis and the werkes of mercy; they that lettithe it be dampned. And therfor lete no body counsaile none other thinge that may be ayenst his sowle, for, as it is saide before, he shalle be partable in the synne. The .ix. foly, and the last, that Eue dede was the grettest, for whanne God asked her whi she had broke his comaundement, and made her husbonde to synne, she beganne to excuse her, and saide that the serpent hadde counsailed her and made her to do it. And so she wende to haue lytelyd her synne, to haue charged an other, of the whiche it semithe God was worst apaied with her thanne before; for because God sayde that the bataile shulde euer be betwene the \*deuelle and her, for that she beleuid for to haue pareille to God, and that she passed his comaundement, and that she beleued to do the deuells byddinge more thanne his that made her, and for she deseyued her husbonde by her euell counsaile, and that she enforced her to excuse her of her misdede and synne, there was bataile betwene God, man, woman, and the fende; for her excusation displeysed gretly God, as dothe by hem now a dayes that confessithe hem to the preest, the whiche is in Goddes stede, that in shryfte excusithe hem and polysshithe her synne. And they telle it not in as foule wise as they do it, and ar shamed to saye it, but thei be not shamed to do it; and therfor thei be lyke

husbands  
wrong;  
\* [Fol. 21,  
col. 1.]  
for a woman  
has part with  
her husband  
both in good  
and evil.

If people will  
not do good  
themselves,  
they should  
not lead  
others to evil.

The ninth  
folly of Eve,  
the last and  
greatest, was  
to attempt  
to excuse  
herself to  
God,

\* [Fol. 21,  
col. 2.]

which greatly  
displeased  
Him.



Saint Paul  
warns us to  
confess our  
sins as foully  
as we do  
them.

This is the  
end of the  
story of Eve.

No wise wo-  
man should  
be hasty to  
wear new  
styles of  
dress.

\* [Fol. 21b.  
col. 1.]

Eve that wolde haue excused her. But seint Paule saithe, who wille be clenly wasshe and clensid of his synne, he must telle his synne in as foule wyse as he dothe it, or ellys he is not clensyd of his synne. For Saint Peter saithe that, as a theef wol be gladde there as he ys hidde, and not be wrayed of his thefte, nor that there is none that acusithe hym, nor that tellithe his dedes, so farithe it by the synnes, for they be gladde to reste in hem bi the deuellys ordenaunce that wol kepe hem prively and hide hem *without* plein confession and tellynge in what wise they haue be done. Now wil y leue to speke of Eue oure furst moder, and how the fende tempered her and made her erce. And y wille telle you that no wise woman aught to be hasty to take upon the new noualitees of array and queyntys, as y herde \*an holy man preche, and not longe sythe. And after y wille telle you upon that matere of a knight that hadde .iij. wyffes.

#### CHAPTER XLVII—XLIX.

And after y. wille turne agayne to the tale and matere of euellē women, and of the good that holy writte praisithe.

Account of  
a sermon by  
a learned bi-  
shop, against  
foppery.

Noah's flood  
was a punish-  
ment called  
down by the  
pride of  
dress among  
women,

which leads  
to lechery.

I wol telle you of a sermon that an holy bisshope made, that was a noble and a gret clerk, in the whiche sermon was gret foyssun of ladyes and gentilwomen, that were mervelously arraied in diuerse and queint maners, and hadde highe hornes ; the whiche the holy man beganne to reprove, and yeue diuerse ensaumples to make hem to be layde down, as Noyis flode that stroied the world for the pride and the disguysinge that was amonge women. And whanne the deuelle sawe hem so disguysing and counterfetinge hem, he made hem falle into the foule synne of lechery ; that displesed so moche oure Lorde, that he made it reyne fourti dayes and fourti nightes withoute cesing, so that the water was hygher thanne ani thing on erthe or moun-  
tayne bi the highthe of ten cubites, and thanne alle the worlde was drowned and perished, and there lefte but Noye and his wyff and his iij sonnes and her wyfes, and alle felle thorughe that foule synne of lecherye. And after, whanne the bisshope had

shewed these ensaumples with other, he saide that the women that were so horned were lyche to be horned snailes and hertis and vnicornes. And also he saide by men that wered to shorte gownes and shewed her breches, the whiche is her shame. And so the man with his clothes, \*and the woman with her hornes, mockithe god. And he saide they were like the hertys, that bare downe her hedes in the smallē wode; for whanne thei come to the chirche, and holy water be caste on hem, thei bowe downe the hede. “Y doute,” saide the bisshope, “that the deuelle sitte not betwene her hornes, and that he make hem bowe down the hede for ferde of the holy water.” And for sothe he tolde hem mani meruailes, and hidde no thinge, nor of the settinge of her tyre pynnes and array, unto that he had made mani of hem right heui and sori. And they had so gret shame that they bowed her hedes to the erthe, and hidde hem selff reproued and mocked. And there was mani of hem that yede home and neuer atyred hem in suche array after. For he saide that suche array was like the attercoppe that makithe his nettes to take the flyes or thei be ware, so the deuelle makithe hem to be taken in synne *with* the lokinge and sight of her tyre, the whiche makithe hym to desire and delite foule plesaunce of the synne of lechery, as it is more plainly contened in the boke that is cleped the Lyff of Faderes. And he saithe that they synned gretly that furst takithe these arrayes, and he saithe that they that ar most hardy to do it ar most foles. And he saide that alle good women aught to be aferde to take ani suche array till it were take in alle the contrey, and that thei may no lenger flee it for worldely shame, for thei that takithe suche arrayes furst shal be with God most blamed and haue lest plesaunce and worshippe in heuene. And \*thus the bisshope preched to hem diuerse ensaumples, and tolde hem an ensauple of .ij. yonge women that wolde haue hasted hem tofore her felawes towards a fest and a gret semble of ladies and gentilwomen, to that entent that they and her new array and disguysing might be furst sayne atte the feste; and therfor they yode ouer a mareys for the next waye, but thei felle in the myre, and

Women wearing horns were like snails and unicorns.

\*[Fol. 21b. col. 2.]

When vainly-dressed people go to church, the devil sitteth on their heads and maketh them bow down for fear of the holy water.

And many of his audience went away reproved and aslamed, and put off their vain attire.

Those sin most who first wear fine clothes;

\*[Fol. 22. col. 1.]

as did two young women who went to a feast to shew their fine clothes, and to get there first went over a morass, and

fell in, get-  
ting to the  
feast last of  
all ;

when they  
were mocked  
and scorned  
for their  
vanity.

There be  
many women  
that, when  
they see fine  
clothes on  
another, give  
their hus-  
bands no rest  
till they have  
the same.

\* [Fol. 22,  
col. 2.]

For this sin  
of vanity the  
world was  
drowned in  
Noah's time.

Where a  
vain woman  
pleases one  
by her dress,  
she displeases  
twenty.

fouled al her clothes and array, and were latter atte the feste thanne thei that held the highe way, the whiche had her array clene. And the cause of this .ij. womenis hyenge to the feste-ward was knowen, and how thei wolde goo the shortest way for to haue sheued furst her berelle and queint array ; and thanne thei were mocked and scorned of alle folke for her leudnesse ; and folke saide that it was wel done that thei felle in the myre, for there be suche that wenithe to auance hem that hinderithe hem, for had they holde the highe waye and wered mene array, they had be as sone atte the fest as the other ladyes and gentille women that come the highe waye. Also the prechour tolde hem that there be diuerse that, and thei see a lewde woman haue a nwe guyse, they wille neuer leue cryeng on her husbondes unto they haue the same, sayeng, "Whi may not y haue suche arraye as wel as she? am not y as welle bornn as she?" but she takithe none hede of her husbonde hathe wherwith to pay for it, or hethe in his power to maintayne it. And thus, but she haue it, her husbonde shal neuer be in pees with her. And she wolde not take hede to abyde unto her neygheboures and good wise ladies and gentilwomen haue ta\*ken up the guyse or array that she wold haue. And also the bisshope tolde hem that for suche disguysinge the worlde was perished with Noieys flode. Also he tolde how there was onis a gentille woman that come to a fest so straungely atyred and queintly arraied to haue the lokes of the pepille, that alle that sawe her come ranne towardes her to wonder lik as on a wilde beste, for she was atyred with highe longe pynnes lyke a iebet, and so she was scorned of alle the company, and saide she bare a galous on her hede. And therfor it is a gret foly for ani woman to bringe up ani newe noueltees of array ; for, yef there be one that it plesithe, there is twenty that is there-with displeased and scornithe and mockith it. And therfor the bisshope bade hem leue these queintyses, for it is the synne of pride, and engenderithe and kendelithe lechery ; and of pride, for the whiche pride the aungeles felle into helle, and so it may happe they shalle that usen yt.

Faire doughters, y wolde ye knew an ensauple of a knight that had .iij. wives ; the whiche knight was a good man, and had an heremyte to hys uncle, the whiche was an holy man of lyff. And as to this knightis furst wyff, she was a faire lady and a goodly woman, and her husbonde loued her merueylously welle. And so it befelle that dethe, the whiche alle takithe, toke her from her husbonde, thorughe the whiche he was almost dede for sorughe ; and he hadde none other comfort but to goo to hys brother the heremite, and praied hym that he wolde praie to God to yeue hym \*knowlage yef his wyf were saued or not, and that he might [know] how it stode with her. And the holy man whiche had pitee of his neuw, sorufulle he yede into his chapelle, and praied God that he might see in what place she was ; and whanne he had be longe in hys praiers, he felle aslepe. And hym semed he saw seint Michelle and the deuelle that had her in a balaunce, and alle her good dedes in the same balaunce, and a deuelle and alle her euell dedes in that other balaunce. And the most thinge that greuid her was her good and gay clothing, and furies of gray meuiere and letuse ; and the deuelle cried and sayde, "Seint Michel, this woman had tenne diuerse gownes and as mani cotes ; and thou wost welle lesse myghte haue suffised her after the lawe of God ; and with the valu of one of her cotes or gownez there might haue be clothed .l. poure men and kept from colde in gownes of white or russet. And also, with that that was wasted of her clothes, she might haue clothed .ij. or .iij., the whiche deied for colde." And whanne the deuelle sawe her clothes, he ranne and toke hem, and caste hem in the balaunce with her euell dedes. And he toke alle her iuellys and rynges that was geuen her by galauntys forto haue had her to do foly, and also alle the false langage that she had saide in sclaudering other to bringe hem oute of her good name ; and she dede neuer euell dede but yt was brought thedyr and caste in the balaunce with her euell dedes ; and alle her good dedes were putte in that other balaunce with her self ; but for conclusyon her array, gownes, juelles, ryngges, and \*euell dedes passed the good, and

There was a knight who had three wives, and his uncle was an hermit.

He loved his first wife much, and, on her death,

went to his brother,  
\* [Fol. 22b. col. 1.]

who went to his chapel and prayed,

till he fell asleep, and in a vision saw St. Michael and the devil weighing the knight's wife,

against her gay clothes and furs,

with the cost of one of which fifty poor men might have been clad.

The devil cast her clothes and the presents made her in one scale with her evil deeds,

and her good deeds and herself in the other ;  
\* [Fol. 22b. col. 2.]

and her  
dresses and  
evil deeds  
outweighed  
her good  
deeds,  
and she was  
carried down  
to hell.

weyed downe and ouercame her good dedes. And there the deuelle toke her, and bare her away, and putte her clothes and aray brennyng in the flawme on her with the fire of helle, and kist her doune into the pitte of helle ; and the pore soule cried, and made moche sorughe and pite, but it boted not. And thanne for ferde the heremite awaked, and tolde the knight his neuwe of his auision ; and bade hym take and go selle anone alle her clothes, and with the syluer to beye clothe to clothe pore men, and to departe yt amonge hem.

Then the  
knight mar-  
ried a second  
wife, and she  
died,

After the knight was wedded to another wiff, and he and the secounde wiff leued togedre .v. yere, and after she deyed. wherfor he made as moche sorw or more as he dede for the furst wiff ; and thanne he yode ayen to the ermyte his uncle to wete how it stode with her, as he wost how it stode with the furst wyff. And so the holy man the eremyte praied to God that he might haue knowlage how it stode with her. And anone by reuelacion she was sheued hym there she was in purgatori, and that she shulde be saued, but she shulde abide in the brennyng fere an hundred yere, forto clense her of sertaine fautes that she had done in her mariage ; for she had lete a squier lye bi her, and brake her mariage, notwithstandinge she hadde oft be shriue thereof ; and yef she had not, she had be dampned. And thanne the ermyte tolde his brother the knight that hys secounde wyf was saued, of the whiche the knight was ioyfulla. \*Here

and the  
hermit,  
in a vision,  
saw her in  
purgatory,

for a hundred  
years,

for her  
adultery.

\* [Fol. 23,  
col. 1.]  
For one sin  
only she was  
not eternally  
punished.

ye may take hede that for one synne that she most be so longe in the brenning fyre of purgatorie. But it might be as the holy ermyte saide, that the squier and she hadde done the synnes togedre .x. or .xij. tymes, *and*, notwithstanding confession, thei that do it, for euery dede thei shalle be .vij. yeere in the brenning fire of purgatori ; for that fire dothe but purge *and* clense on sinfulla delite. And thus ye may see what she hadde for her synne. And yet she hadde not do it with no wedded man, nor preest, monke, nor frere ; and the squier had not gendered on her no childe, the whiche synne wolde haue hadde gretter payne than that she dede. And therfor, faire doughtres, here ye may see that fals delite is atte the laste dere bought with payne. And

Purgatory  
will purge  
out one sin.

False delights  
are dear  
bought with  
pain.

also that it is synne to haue so mani diuerse clothes, and to do so moche coste to pare the foule body to haue the lokes and plesaunce of the worlde, the whiche, as it ys aforesaid, causithe to falle into pride and into lechery, the whiche is .ij. of the synnes that God hatithe most. And takithe hede of the knightis furst wyff, how she was loste and dampned for her array ; for there be mani women in the worlde that wille haue a gowne of .iiij.<sup>xx</sup>. or .v.<sup>xx</sup>. scutis, that wolde be fulle sori to yeue a scute to a pore man to beye hym with a poure cote to kepe hym from colde. And therfor they that haue suche array ar like and shalle ansuere onis ; but a good woman shulde arraie her after her husbondes pusaunce and hers, and in suche wise as it might endure and be \* meinteyned. And yet kepe sum for to departe for the loue of God, the whiche may helpe her forto haue clothinge in that other worlde, as dede the holy women that were seintis that gaue away her array for Goddes sake.

A good woman should dress after her husband's station.  
\* [Fol. 23, col. 2.]

After, the same knight toke another wiff, the whiche was the thridde, and they leued longe togedre, and atte the laste she deyed ; and whanne she was dede, he toke suche a sorw for her that unnethe the knight might leue. And thanne he yede to his vnclle the ermite to praie hym to wete how it stode with hys laste thridde wiff : and the holi man lay in his praieres and fel aslepe And an aungelle shewed hym the payne and the turment that she was made to suffre and endure, the cause why for he sawe perfityly, how a deuelle helde her bi the tresses of the here of her hede, like as a lyon holdithe his praie, in suche wise as she might not with her hede remoue ; and the same deuelle putte and thruste in her browes, temples, and forhede, hote brenninge alles and nedeles, into the brayne ; and the poure woman cried atte eueri tyme that he threste in alle or nedille, the whiche was brenninge. And the ermyte asked the aungelle whi the fende dede her suffre that payne. And the aungelle saide for because she hadde, whanne she was on lyue, plucked her browes, front, and forehed, to haue away the here, to make her selff the fayrer to the plesinge of the worlde ; wherfor, in euery hole that her here hathe be plucked oute, euery day onis the deuelle thrustithe in a brennyng alle or a

The knight had a third wife, who also died,

and the hermit

saw her suffer great tortures in hell.

The devil thrust in her face hot burning awls and needles,

because she had pulled the hair out of her forehead.

\*[Fol. 23b.  
col. 1.

And another  
devil smeared  
her face with  
hot pitch, oil,  
and tar,

because she  
used to paint  
it.

People should  
be satisfied to  
be as God  
made them.

Why do  
women try  
to make  
themselves  
otherwise  
than as God  
made them?

\*[Fol. 23b.  
col. 2.]

And she was  
to be there a  
thousand  
years and  
more.

And the  
hermit awoke  
and told the  
knight what  
he had seen.

nedille into the brayne. \*And after that the deuelle had made her suffre tho gret peynes, the whiche dured longe, another deuelle come, with gret sharpe foule hideous tethe and clowes, and enflaumed her face with brenning piche, oyle, terre, grece, and boyling lede, and ferde so horribly with her, that the ermite tremeled and was almost oute of his witte for ferde. And the aungelle comforted hym, and saide that he be not aferde, for she hadde wel deserued the payne, with more; and the ermite asked whi. The aungelle answered, for whanne she was on lyue she plucked, popped, and painted her uisage, forto plesse the sight of the worlde, the whiche dede is one of the synnes that displeases most God; and that is a synne of pride that drawithe after hym the synne of lechery, for the whiche Noieys flode come and stroyed alle the world; for of alle thinge it displesithe most the creatoure that wille yeue hym self other beaunte thanne nature hathe geuen hym. Whi suffisithe it not that God hathe formed man and woman after hys owne shape, in the whiche the aungeles so moche delitithe hem, for ioye to see God in the uisage? For, and God wolde, hym nedithe not to haue made hem women, but dome bestis or serpentis. Alas! whi take women none hede of the gret loue that God hathe yeue hem to make hem after hys figure? and whi popithe they, and paintithe, and pluckithe her uisage, other wise thanne God hathe ordeined hem? And therfor the aungelle saide it was but litelle meruaile though this lady, for her poppinge and peintynge, suffre \*this payne. And the aungel bade the ermite goo see the uisage of the body that was dede, and ye shall see that it ys hideous and ferdfulle. And the ermite asked the aungelle yef she shulde be longe in turment. And he saide she shulde be thereinne a thousande yere and more, but the terme other wise he wolde not telle. And the fende alweye wolde smere her in the face with the brennyng piche, grese, oyle, lede, and terre. And the pore soule dyd crye and curse the tyme that euer she was made or born. And for the fere that the ermite hadde, he sterte and waked oute of his auisyon, and come to the knight, and tolde hym alle that he had, sain. And the knight was abashed, and yode to see the body

that was not beryed. And he sawe his wiffes face so blacke, horrible, and hideous, that it was wonder thinge to see; wherthorughe he beleued the ermytes wordes were true. And so the knight had gret abhominacyon *and* ferde at the last worde, and wered the hayre the tuysday and the fryday, and gaue the thridde parte of hys good for Goddes sake; and he used holy lyff from that tyme forward, and lefte the bobaunce of the worlde for ferde of the sight of his wyff, that he sawe so orible for her poppyng, pluckyng, and paintynge of her uisage. And also he remembered hym of alle that his uncle the holy ermite had tolde hym by hys other wiffes.

And the knight went and saw how hideous his wife's face was,

and he was afraid, and gave away the third part of his goods, and 'used holy life' henceforth.

## CHAPTER LIII.

## [Of a lady who was punished for painting herself.]

TO conferme these ensaumples, doughtres, y wille telle you a tale that was tolde me of a lady that y knewe that folke \*saide she popped and farded her. And<sup>1</sup> y sawe hym that folke saide that toke her the thinge that she dite so her self with. And a gret while she was a lady of gret auctorite, worshipped *and* [made] moche of. And she had sum tyme more thanne .iiij.<sup>xx</sup> gownes, but atte the laste endyng of her lyff she had lasse, for her lorde deyed, and she had not wherwith to susteine her astate and arraye, and she deyed in pouertee. And whanne she was dede, y haue herde saie that her uisage become so hideous, and in suche a foule wise, that no maner of man might know that euer she had uisage, nor that no body wost what thinge it was like there her uisage shulde haue ben, that no body wist what it was, nor none might endure to loke thereon for obribelnesse. And y suppose, and so dede other, that God gaue on her that ensauple and punission for because she popped, painted, plucked, and fared her hede. Wherfor, faire doughtres, takithe ensauple, *and* holde it in youre herte that ye putte no thinge to poppe, painte, and fayre youre uisages, the whiche is made

Of a lady who 'popped and farded her.'

\* [Fol. 24, col. 1.]

She was a great lady, and had more than four score dresses, until her husband's death.

After, she died in poverty, and her face was so hideous that no man could look on it.

And thus God showed an example of punishment for painting and popping. Wherefore no woman

<sup>1</sup> 'And' repeated in MS.



should alter  
her visage  
from what  
God has  
made it,  
nor wash her  
hair other-  
wise than  
with lye and  
water.

At the church  
of our Lady,  
diuerse ladies  
could not  
come in, till  
\* [Fol. 24,  
col. 2.]

they had cut  
off their hair,  
which they  
had washed  
in wine and  
other things  
to alter the  
colour of it.

And thus our  
Lady showed  
them their  
sin,

that they  
might know  
it, and might  
amende it.

after Goddes ymage, other wise thanne *your* creatoure and nature hathe ordeined ; and that ye plucke no browes, nother temples, nor forhed ; and also that ye wasshe not the here of youre hede in none other thinge but in lye and water. For ye shalle finde of miracles that hathe be done<sup>1</sup> in the chirche of oure lady of Rochmadame, diuerse tresses of ladies and gentille women that had be wasshe in wyne and in other thinges forto make the here of coloure other wise thanne God made it, \*the whiche ladies and gentil women that aught the tresses were comynge thedirward on pilgrimage, but they may neuer haue pouere to come withinne the chirche dore unto the tyme that thei hadde cutte of the tresses of her here, the whiche is hanged there afore the ymage of oure lady ; and this is trewe and thinge proued, as diuerse that haue ben there sayen. And this was a gret loue of oure lady, that she wolde late thilke ladyes and gentyl women that aught that here, haue that knowlage, that it was for that synne that they might not come into the chirche, and that she wolde not late hem reyne euer in that synne, to be loste perdurably, but she wolde thei woste wherein they folied, and that they might amende hem, and bring hem oute of the weye of dampnacion. And therfor, doughtres, takithe here youre myrrour and ensauple to leue alle suche lewde folyes and counterfeting, poppinge, and peinting. And [it] engenderithe pride and lecherye thorughe alle the worlde, the whiche was stroyed saue .viij. persones for that horrible synne of lechery.

## CHAPTER LIV.

### [Of Lot's wife.]

An example  
of eight cities  
that "sanke  
to helle,"

I wol telle you an ensauple of .viij. citees that sanke to helle, and that was brent for that orible synne. Also the citee of Venges in Bretayne in the bisshopriche of Nauntes, the whiche

<sup>1</sup> 'done' repeated in MS.

sanke for synne of pride and lecherye. And also the citee of Sodom and Gomer, of the whiche Loth was saued and his wyff and his .iiij. doughtres. And also other .v. citees, the whiche God made brenne with the fire of the sulphure. And alle \*thei that were thereinne were brent and sanke to helle, and the cause was for they vsed the unlefulle synne of lecherye, the whiche stinkithe and cromptithe vnto heuene, and mistornithe the ordre of nature. And thus the .viij. citees were sonken and brent for because of her foule brenninge lechery done in hem ayenst nature; for they kepte thereinne nother lawe ne reson nor order of nature, and as her hertis were brennyng in that foule synne, so with sulfur oure Lorde made brenne hem, the whiche is one of the most stinkinge fires of the worlde. And in this the vengeance of God was sheued hem for this synne. And therfor here is an ensauple how folke shulde kepe hem from suche lustes of the flesshe that it ys ordeined by ordre of mariage, the whiche ys the comaundement of God and the chirche. And whanne Looth and hys wyff and his .iiij. doughters were gone oute of the citee of Gomer by the comaundement of God, and bade that they shulde neuer turne nor loke ageyn, Loothis wiff was not wise to kepe the comaundement of God, but she loked ageine, and sawe the towne and the pepille, and she turned to a stone, the whiche is significacion of hem that God deliuerithe oute of perille and synne, the whiche turnithe ayen therto into the waye of dampnacion, that is to mene, that they that be confession are clensed and repented, and beden that they shulde not loke bakwarde ayenne to do synne, and they do it, and turne ayen, fare as Loothis wyf, that loked bacwarde and became a stone or not, as dede she that brake \*Goddess comaundement.

Doughtres, y wolde ye knew an ensauple of a lady that left her lorde, the whiche was a goodly knight, and yede away with a monke. And so her brother yede after, and sought her so longe till thei fonde her and the monke lyeng togederes. And they toke a knyff, and cutte away the monkes stones, and kest hem in dispite atte her uisage, and made her ete hem. And after they toke a gret sacke, and putte her and the monke

\* [Fol. 24b. col. 1.]

because of the sin of lechery,

which burnt the hearts of the people as the sulphur did their houses.

Lot and his wife and three daughters went out from Gomorrah,

but his wife looked back and was turned to a stone,

like those who after confession return again to sin.

\* [Fol. 24b. col. 2.]

A woman left her husband and went with a monk,

and her brother followed them,

and they put her and the

monk in a sack, and threw them into the river and drowned them.

thereinne, with mani gret stones with them, and kiste hem in to the ryuer, and drowned hem, and thus they made thaire ende of that foule synne that they were inne; for gladly euell lyf hathe euell ende.

## CHAPTER LV.

## [Of Lot's daughters.]

How the devil tempted Lot and his daughters to sin against nature.

One daughter advised the other to make him drunk, and they both lay with him,

and he begat them both with child.

*Caxton, c. v. b.*

Of their two sons came "fals lawe."

Also an example of a servant who for a hood betrayed her mistress to a knight;

**Y**Et y wol telle you an ensaumple upon this orible synne of lechery, of Loothis .ij. doughtres, and how the deuelle tempted hem in synne ayenst nature. They sawe her fader lye naked, withoute any breche, and thei were bothe tempted to haue flesshely to do with her fader. And thus that one doughter discouered her to that other, and that one counsailed to make hym gret chere tyl he were dronke, and thanne they two goo to bedde to hym, and so thei dede, and made hym to dele with hem flesshely. And he had thus the maydenhode of his owne .ij. doughteres. And therfor seithe and takithe hede what perille is to synne in glotenie, as dede Looth, thorough the whiche he wist not what he dede with his doughtres, notwithstandinge he begate hem bothe with childe that night,<sup>1</sup> [and had two sones, the one named Moab, and the other was called Amon, of whiche two sones cam first the paynyms and the fals lawe, and many euyls; and sorwe cam by that synne. And men saie they were bycome passyng proude after the transformacion of their moder, and that all their entent was to coyntyse and arraye them self; whiche caused the deuyll fyrst to tempte them lyghtlyer, and the sooner he brought them to that fowle synne of lechery. I wold also ye couthe, and well hadde withold within youre thoughtes, the example of the fowle damoyssel, the whiche, for a hood that a knyght gaf her, she dyde soo moche by certayne yeftes and promesses that her lady dyd his wyll, and made her to be diffamed and dishonoured, wherof grete meschyf befelle. For a seruau

<sup>1</sup> A leaf is here wanting in the MS., and I have been obliged to supply the lacuna from Caxton's translation.

of her lord, whiche of yougth he hadde brought vp and norysshed, perceyued hym of it and told it to his lord, in so moche that soone after he toke & fond the knyzt with his wyf; he kylde hym, and dyde his wyf to be mewred and putte in pryson perpetuel, where as she deyde in grete sorowe and langoure. It happed ones or she was dede that her lord came forth by the pryson where she was in. He thenne stood styll and harked what she said, and she sorowed sore, and cursid her that had counceyled her so to doo. And thenne he sent one to wete what was she that so had counceyled her. And she saide how it was her damoisell. The lord made her come tofore hym, and commaunded and straytly charged her that she sholde say trouthe. And at the last she confessed that she was cause of her meschyf, and that she had counceyled her, & for her laboure she had of the knyght a hooode. And thenne the lord saide, "For a lytel thyng ye haue vndo yow, and haue be to me traitresse; and therfore I iuge and gyue sentence that the hood and the neck be bothe cutte togeder." And soo was her iugement.

Now maye ye see how good is to take with hym good companye, and in his seruyse good and trewe seruauntes, that be not blamed of no man lyuynge. For the saide damoyzell was not wyse. And therfore good is to take wyse seruauntes, and not fooles. For fooles and shrewd seruauntes be sooner brought to doo somme euylle, and to gyue euylle counceylle to their lorde or lady, than other; as dyde the two doughters of Lothe one \*to other, and the same damoyssel whiche had and receyued the gwerdon of her deserte.

and another  
servant told  
his lord,

who killed  
the knight,  
and put his  
wife in prison.

And he heard  
her in prison  
cursing her  
maid,

and he made  
her confess  
that she had  
counselled  
her lady evil,

and he had  
her hood and  
neck cut  
together.

Therefore it is  
good to have  
true servants,  
and not fools.

\* [Caxton,  
c. vi.]

## CHAPTER LVI.

Of the doughter of Iacob that was depuceled or  
her maydenhode taken fro her.

I Shalle telle you another Example of the doughter of Iacob,  
whiche for lyghtnes and iolyte of herte left the hous of

Jacob's  
daughter, for  
lightness,

went to see  
women of  
other lands,  
and a great  
lord saw her,

and took her  
and lay with  
her; and her  
brethren slew  
hinn and most  
of his kin.

Much damage  
comes by a  
foolish  
woman,

as by a  
daughter of a  
king of  
Greece,

through  
whom a thou-  
sand men  
were slain  
in war,  
until her  
uncle per-  
suaded her  
father to  
make peace,

and her  
father had  
her cut in  
small pieces.

her fader and of her bretheren, for to goo and see the atoure or aray of the wymmen of another lande. Wherefore hit happed that Sychem, the sone of Amor, which was a grete lord in that londe, sawe her so faire that he coueyted her, and prayd her of loue in so moche he took fro her [her] maydenhode. & thenne when her twelue bretheren wyste and knewe of hit, come thyder and slewe hym, and also the moost parte of his lygnage, and of his folke, for the shame that they had of their suster that so had be depuceled or defowled. Now loke ye and see how by a foolysshe woman cometh many euyllis & damages; for by her yougthe and by her lyght courage was made grete occysion and shedynge of bloode. As it fortunend and happed by a doughter of a kyng of Grece, whiche by her foolysshe loue acoynted her of the sone of an erle of that countre. Wherefore the kyng made hym werre, duryng the which more than a thousande men were slayn. And yet hadde the werre lenger lasted, when the kynges broder, whiche was a wyse man, come to the kyng and saide to hym, "Syre," quod he, "I merueyle moche that, only for the sport and delyte of youre doughter, so many good knyghtes ben lost, & also so many good men. It were better that neuer she hadde be borne." The kyng thenne saide, "Ye saye trouthe." And anone he made his doughter to be take, by whiche the meschyef was bygonne, and made her to be hewen in smal pyeces. And thenne before all he said, that wel right it was that she sholde be so detrenchid by whome so many had<sup>1</sup> ben hewen and slayn.

## CHAPTER LVII.

Of Thamar that hadde companye with hir husbondes fadre.

Tamar, widow  
of Judah's son,  
\*[Caxton, c.  
vi. b.]

I Wylle that ye here the xample of Thamar, whiche was wyf to Henam, that was sone of Iuda, sone of Iacob, & broder \*to Ioseph. This Henam was yrouis and felon, and of euyl lyf, of whiche I wylle not say moche nor al bycause God wold that he

<sup>1</sup> 'had' repeated in Caxton's text.

deyd sodenly and pytously. And as Thamar sawe that of her lord she myht haue no lygnage, she bethought her that the fader of her lord shold yet engendre & gete children wel, and that she was not barayn, and coueyted and desyred to haue his fleshely companye, whiche was ageynst the lawe. Neuertheles, so moche she dide that she cam by nyght in his chambre, and leid her with hym, and, as I wene, she conceyued of hym two children, of whiche the one was named phares, And the other had to name Zaram. Wherfor many tribulacions and euyls befelle afterward. For the children that ben not of trewe maryage, they be they by whome the grete herytages and auncestri ben loste. Wherof I shalle telle you an ensample of a kynge of Naples, as it is conteyned in the cronycles of that lond. There was somtyme a quene of that lond, whiche clenly ne truly kepte her body toward her lord, in so moche she gate a sone by another than her lord. It befelle afterward, that this sone was made kynge of the lond after the dethe of the kynge. This newe kynge was passynge prowde, and loued not his lordis ne barons, but was to them full hard and felon, & also to al his comyns he was vnresonable. For he took fro them all that he couthe, and enforced their wyues, and vyoled their doughters, and vsed all euyl dedes whiche he couthe ymagyne to doo. He bigan werre to his neyghbours and to his barons, in so moche that alle the reame was put in exyle and brought to grete pouerte; whiche longe tyme lasted. In that tyme was ther a baron, a good man and a right good knyght, whiche went vnto an heremytage, where as was an hooly heremyte moche relygious, and that many thynges knewe. The knyght demaunded and asked of hym, "how and wherfore they had so longe warre in the lond, and yf it shold yet last long tyme." And]<sup>1</sup> \*the ermite saide it shulde dure as longe as this man were kinge, for he is not rightfulle heire, but misgoten, and therfor the reme that he hathe no right may neuer acorde with hym, nor may not haue the loue of the peple, and whanne he ys dede ye shulle haue rest and habundaunce of alle good. And as the ermite saide, in al thinge it was, and that the ermite saide,

seeing she  
had no chil-  
dren,

lay with her  
father-in-law,  
and had two  
children,

of which  
came great  
evils.

A queen of  
Naples had a  
son by an-  
other than  
her lord;

and the son  
became king,

and governed  
badly,

doing all  
evil dedes  
that he could  
imagine.

And a baron  
went to a  
hermit,

and asked  
how long  
these evils  
would last.

\* [Fol. 25,  
col. 1.]

And the  
hermit said  
it would last  
until the false  
king was  
dead.

<sup>1</sup> The MS. begins again here.

And the son  
found his  
mother lying  
with a priest,  
and burnt  
them both.

Therefore  
beware of  
adultery, and  
hold truly to  
your husband.

that the fals quene his moder shulde be punisshed or she deyde for her falsshede, for the king her sone shulde find her lyeng with a preest, and he shuld brenne hem bothe in a brenninge furnayse ; and thus was her ende. Therfor, doughtres, be ware for brekinge of youre mariage, and of getinge of false heires, the whiche may putte alle a londe in tribulacion. And the moder shalle be dampned perpetuely, as long as thaire chyldren kepithe away the londe that they haue no right to from the rightfulle heyres, that is to saie, her moderis husbondes londes. And therfor be ware, doughtres, of this auouuntry, and that ye take no man saue hym that ys ordeined you by sacrement of mariage, and kepithe and holdithe hym to you truly.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

### [Of king Pharaoh's wife and of Joseph the son of Jacob.]

Joseph, the  
son of Jacob,  
was sold into  
slavery,

and became  
a favourite  
with the king  
of Egypt.

\* [Fol. 25,  
col. 2.]

And the  
queen desired  
him to have  
folly with her,

and when he  
would not,  
she was mad  
for sorrow.

But he was a  
good man,  
and would  
not betray his  
master,  
and she  
caught his  
mantle, and  
began to cry,  
and told the  
king he tried  
to ravish her.

Doughtres, y wille telle you an ensauple upon this synne of lechery, how that Ioseph, the sone of Iacob, that was solde bi his bretheren to the kinge Pharaos. This Ioseph was humble, curteys, and seruisable, and gouerned hym with the kinge in suche wise that he was beloued of the kinge and of alle other, and he was faire, yonge, and wise \*man. And the kinge lete hym haue gouernaunce of his reme and good. And so the quene caste her loke upon Ioseph, and beganne to desire to haue hym to folly with her ; and she shewed hym mani folly signes and semblauntz of fals loue and sinfulle. And whan she sawe and perceiued that he wold not medille with her, thanne she was wode for sorughe, and called hym into a chaumbre, and praied hym of folly. And he, that was a good man, said her that he wolde not medille with her, and that he wolde neuer be traitour to his maister and lorde. And [whan] she saw he wolde not graunt to her fals horrible and dampnable wille, she caute hym bi the mantellē and beganne to crie, and saide, "This fals traitour wolde haue rauisshed and disworshipped me here." And thanne

the kinge, thorughe her false subieccion, putte Ioseph into stronge prison, and therein kepte hym longe. And God gaue knoulage to the kinge Pharon of the falshede of the quene and the trouthe of Ioseph, and he was hadde oute of prison, and made gretter maister thanne euer he was, and was more worshipped. And the quene was shamed as she was worthi, and deied an euell dethe. And thus God quitithe bothe good and euell. And therfor doughtres, be ware that ye do none auoutry, nor caste not youre desire to haue no man saue youre husbonde, that ye be not shamed as this quene was.

And the king put Joseph in prison, until God shewed him the truth. Then he made Joseph greater than ever, and the queen died an evil death.

## CHAPTER LIX.

## [Of Moab's daughters.]

**I** wille telle you an ensauple of Moabis doughtres, the whiche were fulle of the synne of lecherie ; for Balam, that was \*of the fals lawe, toke hem and arraied hem gayly, and sent hem into the oste of the children of Israel, the whiche were the children of God, forto haue made hem synned with these euell women, forto haue God turne ayenst hem. And whanne the women come thus gaily and fresshely into the oste, ther was mani tempted on hem, and dede her foule wille with hem. And the prince that had the gouernaunce of the ost lete hem allone, and made as they he hadde take none hede therof, and suffered suche felthe to be done ; and God wratthed therwith, and bade Moyses that the princes that had knowlege therof, and suffered suche synne to be done, that they shulde anone be hanged and slayne. And Moyses made crye Goddes biddinge, and it was done, for thei were slaine for the sufferaunce of that foule synne of lechery. And therfor here is an ensauple that no folke of auctorite shulde suffre no suche synne to be done that they might lette it ; and lete hem be ware that God ponisshe not hem therfor. But there is now a dayes that haue the gouernaunce are gladde that folke are of suche harlottry.

Moab's daughters were full of lechery. \* [Fol. 25b. col. 1.]

and tempted the children of Israel to sin.

And God was wroth and bade Moyses put to death the princes who had suffered it.



## CHAPTER LX.

## [Of the daughter of Midian.]

Also the daughter of Midian went to the host of Israel to tempt them to lust,

and went with a great lord,

\* [Fol. 25b. col. 2.]

whose nephew killed them both with a sword.

God would have the Israelites keep clean, and therefore he gave them ever the victory over their enemies.

**A**lso Madiemis doughter, the whiche arraied her selff gaily and yede into the oste of Ebreux, that is to saye, children of Israel, forto fulfelle her foule luste. And there she met with a gret lorde of the oste, the whiche was lightly tempted on her, and toke her to hys loginge, and dede hys foule wille with her. And God sende anone his neuueu to see the iniquite in the oste, that a man of lawe of God \*shulde take another woman of another lawe ; and he droughe his suerde, and whanne he fonde hem togedre, he persed hem bothe thurghe, and in that foule wise they deyde. And he<sup>1</sup> that dede this synne with the woman, was a lorde that was of the lynage of Symon, the whiche was one of the twelue princes of the law ; but for that he was not spared, but he was slayne by the ordenaunce of God ; for he hatithe that abhominable synne of lecheri, and he wolde haue the children of Israel to kepe hem clene. And therfor he gaue hem the uictori of alle enterprises ; for they hadd euer the beter in bataile, though ther had be tenne ayenst one.

## CHAPTER LXI.

## [Of Tamar, King David's daughter.]

Tamar the daughter of David was to take care of her brother Amon, who feigned to be sick,

and he lay with her : and Absalom his brother slew him.

**A**nother ensauple, doughtres, y wille telle you, that no woman shulde in no wyse be with no man allone, were he neuer so nighe of her kyn ; for Tamer, kinge Dauid doughter, for Amon her owne brother, for because he fonde her allone, he feined hym sike, and his suster was ordeined to kepe hym, and he lay be her. And whanne Absolon, hys brother of fader and moder, wost that he had lyene by his suster, he slow his brother Amon. And therfor, doughtres, be ware, as ye wol kepe youre honoure and worshippe bothe, bethe neuer allone with no manere of man, but yef it be youre husbonde, youre fader, or youre sone,

<sup>1</sup> MS. 'in.'

for there hathe mani foule temptaciones falle therof of right nigh kynne afore this tyme. And therfor a woman aught truste to no man, for the deuelle is sotille; the yonge tendir flesshe, whanne it is \*chaufed, it is esy to be tempted. And therfor y rede you takithe the seurest waye.

A woman should trust no man, for the devil is subtle, and young flesh is easily tempted.

\* [Fol. 26, col. 1.]

## CHAPTER LXII.

## [Of a roper's wife who was false to her husband.]

I wolde ye knew an ensauple of a ropers wiff that was not trew in kepinge of her mariage to her husbonde, and there was a false bauude that was her godsib, and toke mede of a riche lecherous prioure to gete the ropers wyff to do his folly with her, the whiche the bauude entreted her to. And thanne, for yeftes and uelles that the prioure gaue to the wiff, and for the entysing of the bauude, the wiff graunted hym to do her foule lust togedre. And therfor it is a true sawe, that a woman that takithe yeftes of ani man, sekithe her selff. And so it happed on a night that the prioure come to lige bi the wiff whanne her husbonde was aslepe; and whanne the prioure had done his foule delit, he rose, and wolde haue gone his waye, and the fyre light sodenly in the chemeney, and the good man sawe hym goo oute. And he sterte up and asked what that was. And his wiff saide she wost neuer; but the good man was in gret sorw and heuinesse, and ferde lest his wyff had done amys. And the wiff, whiche was fulle of malice, yede and spake and tolde the bauude, her godsib, alle how it happed. And the bauude bade lete her allone with hym, and she wolde excuse her welle ynow. And she aspied he was going to the londes, spenyng his cordes, and came afore hym with a rocke under a gerdelle spynning black wolles. And whanne he come, she hadde on her rocke white wolles, and within \*a litelle while of blacke wolles. And alle way as he come to and from she chaunged her wolles. "What!" saide the good man, "godsyb, me thought right now ye had a rocke of blacke wulle under youre gerdelle." "Nay, forsothe," said she; and after

A roper's wife was false to her husband with a lecherous prior,

through the enticing of a bawd.

One night the prior came to lie with her, when her husband was asleep,

and the husband saw him go away,

and was in gret trouble lest his wife had done amys. And the wife told the bawd, who went to the husband in the morning, spinning black wool, which she changed to white wool, and back again.

\* [Fol. 26, col. 2.] Godsib, said he, me thought you had black wool,

and now  
methought  
you had  
white wool.  
The bawd  
replied, There  
is something  
wrong with  
you, as with  
other people  
who thought  
they saw  
strange  
things.  
The roper  
replied, I saw  
to-night a  
black thing go  
out of my  
chamber.  
Ah, said she,  
it was the  
day and night  
strove to-  
gether; and  
thus she  
satisfied him.  
Another time  
he rose early,  
and took the  
prior's  
breeches in  
mistake for a  
bag, and went  
to market to  
buy fish.

When the  
monk rose,  
he found only  
a small bag,  
\* [Fol. 26b.  
col. 1.]

but no  
breeches.

And the wife  
went to the  
bawd, and  
they both put  
on breeches.

When the  
husband came  
home, in  
sorrow, the  
bawd came to  
him, and  
asked what  
ailed him,  
and he told  
her what he  
had found.

She began to  
laugh, and  
said, you do

he come agein, and she had chaunged her rocke. "What, godsib, me thought right now, ye spanne whit wolle." "What, godsib," saide she, "what aylithe you? y trow there be sum thinge wronge with you; yt hathe be to night a night that folke wened that they haue sayne thinges the whiche were none suche. I trow," quod she, "ye aile sumwhat, it nis not aright with you." And the good man wende she had said sothe, and saide to her bi mouthe, "By my trouthe, godsib, y wende y had sayne to night gone oute of my chaumbre a blacke thinge, y not what." "A! godsib," quod she, "it was no thinge but the day and the night that stroue togedre; and there was gret lyghteninge." And thus she apesed the good man of his thought by her falsshede. Another tyme it happed that he rose erliche, and he wende to haue take a litelle poke atte hys beddes fete, to haue gone to the market .iiij. myle from hys hous, forto haue brought home fisse; and he toke the prioures breke, and putte hem in his sleue. And whanne he hadde bought that he wolde haue atte the market, he wende to take oute his poke, and to haue putte inne his fysshe, and he fonde that it was a breche. And whan he sawe it, he was fulle of anger and sorughe. And whanne the monke was ryse that laye betwene the bedde and the walle, hym lacked hys breche, and \*fonde no thinge but a litelle poke. And whanne the wiff wost therof, she was fulle of sorughe, for she supposed wel that her husbonde had take the breche instede of the litelle poke. And she yede to her godsib, the bauude, and tolde her that was behapped, and praied her of her helpe; and the bauude said to her, "Ye shalle take a breche on you, and y wille take another, and whan youre husbonde comithe home, I wolle telle hym that ye and y werithe breches." And whanne the good man was comen home, alle fulle of heuinesse and sorw, the fals godsib come to welcome hym home, and asked hym yef he hadde aught lost of his good, for he made so heui chere; and he saide "Nay, me aylethe sumwhat ellis." And so she dede so moche with hym, that he tolde her what hym ayled, and how he had founde a breche atte his beddes fete. And whanne she had herde hym, she beganne to laughe, and saide hym, "Godsib, now y see welle

ye be deseyued, and in wey to be tempted to do my godsib youre wyff shame and youre selff, thorughe fals supposinge. And therfor leue it, y sure you that there nis not a truer wiff to her husbonde in this towne, nor kepithe her selff clenner nor trulyer to her husbonde; for in good sothe she and y weren breches for because of the harlotis that handelithe women, and takithe hem hastely bi thaire priuite. And that ye may see that this is true, seithe youre selff." And she toke up her clothes, and shewed hym how she was breched; and [he] saw she saide \* sothe, and beleued her. And thus that fals bauude, his godsib, saued the wiff twies, that he might haue no knoulache of his wiffes falshede; but atte the laste the deuelle wolde that the orible synne shulde be know. The good man thought that his wiff went ofte to the priori, and she had not to do there, and he defended her in payne of her lyff she shulde no more come there, for it was not his wille that she yode thedir for no thinge. And so on a tyme, to saye what she wulde do, her husbonde saide he wolde gone oute of towne, and he hidde hym priuely to loke what she wolde do. And she that was fulle of synne, and tempted with the deuelle, yede anone with the prioure; and her husbonde saw, and yode after her and brought her ageyn, and saide, "here, dame, thou hast broke myn comaundement." And thanne he yode into the towne, and made comenaunt with a surgeon to hele two broken legges; and whanne he had done, he come home and toke a pestelle and brake bothe his wyfes ys leggyes, and saide to her, "atte the hardest, for a while, thou wilt not goo ferre, and breke myn comaundement, nother y fynde the contrarye." And thanne he brought her a bedde. And there she laye so longe till the deuelle tempted her; for, whanne she was almost hole, she made the prioure come lye with her ther she laye, euene by her husbonde bi night in the bedde. And the good man douted hym that there was sum man with his wyff, and made semblaunt that he had slepte\*, and routed; and whanne they were doing the foule dede of synne, he hastely toke oute a long kniff and persed hem bothe thorughe into the bedde. And thus he sloughe

your wife  
wrong,

she and I  
both wear  
breeches.

\* [Fol. 26b.  
col. 2.]  
And he be-  
lieved her  
again.

The good  
man thought  
that his wife  
went to the  
priory with-  
out cause,  
and forbade  
her.

And he hid  
himself to see  
if she would  
go there,  
and when she  
did, he fol-  
lowed and  
brought her  
back.

Then he went  
to the town,  
and engaged  
a surgeon,  
and came  
home and  
broke both  
his wife's legs.

The wife lay  
long a-bed,  
and sent for  
the prior to  
come by night  
to her.

The husband  
thinking some  
one was there,  
pretended to  
sleep;

\* [Fol. 27,  
col. 1.]  
and when the  
prior came,

he took out a long knife and killed them both.

Then he called his neighbours, and shewed them what he had done, and they marvelled that she should prefer a fat prior to a goodly husband.

But the more abominable the sin, the greater is the temptation of the devil.

"The pot may go so long to the water, that at last it is broken."

\* [Fol. 27, col. 2.]

It is the devil that tempts and enflames the heart to lechery.

Now have I shewn you divers examples of the wickedness of lechery, and of disguising of array,

hem bothe in doinge this orible synne. And whanne he had done, he called his neyghebores and the office[r]s of the lawe, and sheued hem what he had don; the whiche saide, alle with one uoys, that it was wel done to ponisshen hem in suche wise. And thanne thei had moche meruaile that she wolde loue and take that gret fatte black foule prioure, and lefte to loue a goodly yonge man, wise and riche, that she had to her husbonde; but mani woman farithe as the femalle of the wolff, that chesithe to her make the foulest wolff of alle that ben in the wode. And so dede the leude woman, thorughe temptacion of the deuelle, chase this foule monke. And therfor take hede, the more the synne is abhominable the egerlyer thei be tempted bi the deuelle, as he that was a man of religion, and she a wedded woman. And so it farithe by a woman, yef she synne with her kynne or godsib, the nere thei be of kyn the gretter is the temptacion, and the more sinfull brenning wille thei shalle haue. And therfor it is a trew prouerbe, that "the pottle may goo so longe to water, that atte the laste it is broken;" as this leude woman that had her husbonde ten tymes fairer thanne the prioure the whiche she toke, and that she was ascaped bi the helpe of the false bauude her godsib of .ij. suche periles that her husbond \*hadde founde by her, and after that she had broken her husbondes comaundement, and therfor he brake her legges, and yest she wolde not be chastised. And therfor, doughtres, here ye may see that it is foly, and the temptacion of the deuelle, that temptithe and enflamithe the hertis of folke to do this orible synne of lecherye, the whiche ys a foule stinking synne. Notwithstanding, doughters, be ware bi this woman, and of her afore in this boke, and that ye take no man saue youre husbonde, and that ye take no yeftes, nor leuithe none euell counsaile, as dede this woman of her godsib. Now haue y shewed you diuerse ensaumles of the Bible, and of gestys of kinges, and of other thinges, how that lecheri and the disguising of youre array displeid God, and how alle the world was stroied therfor, saue .viij. persones, and how Sodom and Gomor, and other .v. citees, was brent in stinking sulfure, and sank to helle, and how moche

werres [and] manslaughter hathe falle and fallithe there from day to day, and how the synne of lechery stinkithe afore God and his aungeles. And takithe hede how the uirgines had leuer be martred rather thanne they wolde do that foule synne, for no yefte, nor for no promesse, that might be made to hem ; as seint Katerine, seint Margarete, seint Luce, elleuene thousand uirgines, and other mani uirgines, the whiche were to long to compte the tenthe party of her fermete, for they ouercome the deuelle and hys \*temptaciones, and wanne the kingdom of heuene. And y saie you, doughtres, it is no maistri to absent you from that synne, yef ye wolle use you to kepe you clene. And this shalle helpe to kepe you, that is to loue and drede God and youre husbonde, and bethenke you what sorw, harme, and worldes shame hathe and may falle therof, and ye do amisse ; and how ye lese the loue of God, and of youre husbonde, kyn, frendes, and of alle the worlde that knouithe you and heres therof ; and therfor, doughters, yef temptacion assailethe you, haue mynde day and night to make recistens ageynes hem, to kepe you clene and ferme in goodnesse. And bethenke what ye are, and whennes ye come, and what shame and dishonour may falle<sup>1</sup> you yef ye do euelle.

\*[Fol. 27b. col. 1.]  
and how it is  
easy to keep  
from sin, if  
you will use  
you to be  
clean, and  
love and  
dread God.

If tempta-  
tions come,  
resist them  
day and night,  
and think of  
the shame of  
doing evil.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

## [Of proud women.]

NOW wolle y touche of sum women that haue be proude of the worshippes and goodes that God hathe sent vnto them, and might not suffre ne endure in ese, as it is contained in the Bible, where he telles of Apemena, doughter of a symple knight that was called Berar. This Apemena was yonge, and of gret beauute, in so moche that the king of Surre, that was mighti and of gret nobelnesse, had take her in such manere of loue that thorughe the said folious loue he toke her unto his wiff, and so was she quene of Surry ; and whanne she see her self exalted into gret puissaunce and worshipec, she prised no \*more

Of women  
that are  
proud of  
worldly  
wealth.

Of Apemena,  
wife to the  
king of  
Syria,

\*[Fol. 27b. col. 2.]

<sup>1</sup> 'falle' repeated in the MS.

who despised  
her own  
family,

so that all  
people hated  
her.

At last the  
king drove  
her away  
from him.

The more  
simple a  
husband is,  
the more  
should his  
wife rever-  
ence him.

Of king  
Herod's wife,

\* Fol. 28,  
col. 1.]  
whom the  
people hated  
for her  
cruelty.  
They set her  
husband  
against her  
by saying she  
had another  
lover,  
and she  
answered him  
proudly and  
fiercely,

so that he  
slew her.

her owne lynage, but had despite and indignacion of hem, and become so folyously proude that she deigned not to do reuerence and worshippe unto the kinge and she aught for to do, for because he was symple and debonaire ; nor also to his lynage, in so moche that alle manere of peple had her in hate. And the king toke wrathe vnto her in suche manere that she was shent and driuen away bi the counsaile of the kingges lynage, and she lost the worship that she was in. For mani women may not suffre whanne thei haue worshippe and be wel atte ease, unto the tyme that thorough her orguylleus port ben throwen doune of her worshippe and astate, as dede this quene that come from pore lynage to gret astate. And therfor euery woman that seithe her husbonde esy and symple unto her withoute malice, in so moche she aught to do hym the more reuerence, and to fufelle the sonner his wille, and to kepe his loue ; and therein she worshippes her selff, for she may not do to her husbonde to moche worships. And but yef she do so, it may happe to make her husbondes herte to turne from her and hate her, the whiche were gret harme and perelle, that there shulde be suche diuision betuene hem that shulde be one.

I wolle telle you an ensauple of the gret kinge Heroudes wyff he loued merueylously. So it happed he went to Rome, and duryng the time of his \* being there, the pepille of his housholde purposed to finde a wey to hynder his sayd wiff ayenst hym, for they loued her not, bycause she was to cruelle and to fers ; and reported unto hym that she hadde a priui loue bisyde hym, and in this wise dishonoured her ; of the whiche the saide Herode was greuously wrothe, and of this reproved her. And she ansuered hym fersely and proudly, and demened her not in fairenesse and curtesye, nor so mekely as she shulde do ; so that the sayd Herode was cruelle and despitous to her [for] her orgueilleux langage, and toke a kniff and slow her, of the whiche he was afterwarde full sory, for he fonde that she was untruly accused. And so bi her presumptuous port of langage she made her selff to be slayne. And therfor it is a good ensauple to euery woman to be meke and curteis, and to ansuere mekely,

curtaisly, and softely ayenst of couroux of her husbontle. For the wise Salamon saithe that, by curtesy and softe wordes, good women shulde abate the yre of thaire husbondes. For the wiff of right owithe to honoure her husbonde, though his speche be right or wronge, and in special in hys yre tofore the pepille. And whanne hys yre is passed, she may well shew unto hym that he had wronge. And so shal she kepe the pees and the loue of her husbonde, and of her housholde, and shalle not make her self blamed nor slayne, as dede the furst wyff of king Herodes.

Solomon says that by curtesy and soft words good women may abate their husband's anger.

# CHAPTER LXIV.

## [Of Vastys queen of Assyria.]

NOW wille y telle you another ensauple of a quene that was called Vastys, and she was wiff to the king of Assur. Hit befelle that the said king helde a fest to his barones, and there were alle the gret barones of his londe, and the king and his barones dyned in one halle, and the quene in another. And whanne it was after dinere, the said barones desired of the kinge that hym lyked that thei might see the quene, that was merueilously faire. The king sent vnto her onis, tuyes, thries, and she denied not to come. So that the kinge had gret shame therof, and axsed of his barones what he shulde do. And the counsaile gaue hym that he shulde putte her from hym, and that she shulde not come in his presence of alle a yere, to geue other ensauple to obeye beter to her husbonde; and so dede the king, and made thereof a lawe, that from thennes forwarde euery woman that disobeyed or esconduded her husbonde of ani thinge that he comaunded her, so that it were thing resonable, she shulde be mued alle a yere, with litelle mete and drinke, and kept from the comunicacion of alle peple, for to shew her her defaute; and yet holde they the same custume in that roialme. And thanne the quene was gretly ashamed whanne she saye she most be in mue, and wepte, and made gret sorw, but it was to late, for bi her pride she was in mue from sight of the pepille alle a yeere. So ye shulde \*take here good ensauple.

\* [Fol. 28, col. 2.]  
Of Queen Vastys, wife to the king of Assyria,

who refused to come to her husband when he sent for her,

and he put her away from him for a year,

as is still the custom in that country.

\* [Fol. 286, col. 1.]



An example  
that a wife  
should obey  
her husband,  
especially in  
public ;  
though when  
together in  
private, she  
may speak  
her own  
mind.

A lion, when  
the lioness  
has displeased  
him, will not  
turn to her  
that day or  
night.

And as a lion  
is lord over  
the lioness, so  
ought a  
husband to be  
over his wife.

For in specialle tofore the pepille ye owe to do the comaundement of youre husbondes, and obeye hym, and do hym worshippe, and shewe her semblaunce of loue, yef ye wille haue the louyng of the worlde. But y saie you not but, whanne ye are secretly togedre allone, ye may the more largely saye or do more youre wille, after ye know his manere and condicion. I wille telle you the ensauple of a lyon and of his properte ; whanne the lyonesse hathe done hym ani displese or despite, he wille not turne no more to her of alle that day, ne that night, for no thinge that may befall ; he shewes in suche wise his lordshippe. And it is a good ensauple to euery woman, whanne a wilde beste, that canne no reson but auent that meues hym, makes hemselff dradde and douted of his felaw. Now take hede thanne, a good woman aught not to displese ne disobeye her husbonde that God hathe geuen her by his holy sacrement.

## CHAPTER LXV.

[Of the wife of Aman.]

Of the wife of  
Amon, the  
king's sene-  
schal, who  
rose from  
poverty to  
great riches  
and power,

and became  
so proud that  
he would  
have people  
kneel before  
him.

\* [Fol. 28b.  
col. 2.]

But Mar-  
docheus, a  
noble lady,

disdained  
him,  
so that he  
was wroth,  
and told his  
wife, who  
advised him  
to put her to  
death

And yet wolde y telle you another ensauple upon this matere, of Amons wiff, the whiche Amon was seneschalle of the king, and was comen to pore degre and of mene peple, and and became riche by his seruice, and purchased londes and possessiones, and gouerned also the grettest parti of the londe, and become ryche. And he waxe so pore and presumptuous, that he wolde that euery persone kneled tofore hym and dede hym gret reuerence. So it be\*felle that Mardocheus, that was of grete noblesse, and had norissed the quene after, the whiche was a good and gracious lady and iuste. And it displeased gretly to the said Mardocheus of the pride and presumpcion of that man that was comen of not, and deigned not to do hym worshipec, ne to rise afore hym, and of the whiche the said Amon was right fel and wrothe, and compleyned hym thereof to his wiff, the whiche was proude and of gret corage as he was, and counsailed hym that he lete rise a iebet tofore his dore, and that he made hange the said Mardocheus therupon, and

to put sum cas upon hym thorughe the whiche he had deserued dethe. And the fole Amon beleued his wiff, thorughe the whiche hym befelle gret mischeef. For, whanne he had reised the iebet, the frendes of thilke Mardocheus went rennyng to the quene, and tolde her what Amon wolde do to hym that had norissched her. And the quene for that cause went to seche Amon, and he come tofore the kinge, and he was diligently enquired for the cause that he hadde putte upon hym, so that it was founde that the saide Mardocheus was not culpable therof, but that the other hadde done it by enuye. Thanne the quene after kneled tofore her lorde, and besought hym that men shulde do semble iustice to Amon the seneschalle, and that he and his children were hanged tofore the gate, to shewe that falsly \* and by enuie he hadde iuged the said Mardocheus. And as the good ladi had required, it was done; for he was hanged atte his yate, and his seuene children, and alle thorughe his pride and outrecuydance, and by the folynesse counsaile of his wyff. Thanne it is gret foly to a man that is comen of mene degre, and of naught, to be proude that he knew not hym self, for ani erthely good, and that he dispise ne dispreise none other persone, but, and he be wise, he ought to meke hym self, to that entent to falle in the grace of alle men, and that men haue none enuie upon hym; for men haue often tymes gret enuie of them that comithe of mene degre thanne of hem that comen of good place and automd of auncetry. And also the wiff of the said Amon was not wise, whan she saw the wrathe and courance of her husbonde, to susteyne hym in his foly, and curtesly suage and do away the wrath of her husbonde by fayre wordes and softe, and specially whan she seithe hym moued to do ani harme, or veleni, of the whiche dishonoure and harme might folw. As the wiff of Amon, that undernam not her husbonde of his foly, but rather atysed hym, and gaue hym counsaile thorughe the whiche he deied foule and felonusly. So this is a goo[d] ensauple that a woman shulde not susteine her husbonde in his wrathe and malyncolye, but shulde rather undermyne hym bi resones, litelle and litelle, what harmes and

upon some  
false charge.

But when he  
had raised  
the gibbet,  
the friends of  
Mardocheus  
went to the  
queen, who  
asked the  
king to make  
inquiry;  
and when it  
was found  
that Mar-  
docheus had  
done no  
wrong, she  
asked that  
Amon should  
be hanged  
instead;

\* [Fol. 29,  
col. 1.]  
and so he  
was, with all  
his children.

Therefore it  
is great folly  
for men,  
come of mean  
degree, to be  
proud;

for men envy  
more those  
who have  
risen, than  
those who are  
born great.

This is a good  
example that  
a woman  
should not  
sustain her  
husband in  
his anger, but

try to reason  
with him.

\* [Fol. 29,  
col. 2.]

inconueniencences mow come therof to the foule body ; and so shulde do eueri good \*woman anent her husbonde ; wherfor, faire doughters, take here ensauple, and beholde what harme befelle anone thorough the foly of his wyff.

## CHAPTER LXVI.

[Of queen Jezebel.]

Of Queen  
Jezebel,

who hated  
poor men,

hermits, and  
holy men,

making them  
to be beaten.

There was a  
man called  
Naboth,  
who had a  
vineyard that  
the king  
wanted,

so Jezebel  
had him put  
to death ;  
which dis-  
pleased God.

Then king  
Josiah made  
war on Abaz,  
and cut his  
head off.

This was the  
vengeance of  
God.

\* [Fol. 29b.  
col. 1.]

The queen  
went to a  
garret to see  
the king  
Josiah pass,

and cursed  
him aloud.

AFTER y shal telle you an ensauple of an euell quene and diuers and to cruelle, and how it befelle her. And that [was] quene Gesabelle, that had mani euell taches. Furst, she hated pore men, and alle manere of men of the whiche she might naught haue sum manere of thinge. She hated ermites, men of holy chirche, and alle them that taught the cristen faithe, and made them to be robed and betin, so that it behoued [them] to fle oute of the reaume. She had no mercy of no man, and therfor was she cursed and hated of God and man. Ther was a man that was called Nabot, the whiche had a good pece of wyne, and the kinge desired often tymes to haue it by beying or otherwise, but that good man wolde not consent therto with good herte. And so saide the king to the abouesaid quene his wyff, that he was sori that he might not haue the pece wyne. And she sayde she wolde make hym welle to haue it ; and so she dede. For by treson she made murdre the saide Nabot, and made come false witnesse that he hadde geuen her that wyne ; of the whiche it displesed God. And the king Josue sent for to make her werre, so that he toke the king Ataz, and about .lv. children, what gret and litelle that he had norisshed among his men, and made cutte of thaire hedes. And that was the punicion and the uengeaunce of God. And as to that euell quene \* Gesabelle, she putte her in a garet to see the kinge Josue passe, and made her quaint, and arraied her self in clothes of golde and ermynes and gret precious stones, alle disguysed in, and in other manere thanne the other women were. And she was displesed and proude that, as sone as she sawe the kinge, she beganne to curse, and saie alle the villane that she coulde. And the kinge beganne to beholde the

queintise and the disguisynge of her clothinge, and herkenid the malice and pride of her langage, and comaunded sum of his men that thei shulde goo thedir and caste her downe, and the hede tofore, in the sight of alle the peple. And as he comaunded, it was done, for they toke her and caste her downe. And she deyed velonusly, and the kinge comaunded that, for her gret mischef that she had done, that she shulde haue no berielles; and nomore she hadde, but was eten and deuoured with dogges, and so felle her gret pride. For in suche wise God vengithe hym of them that haue no pitee of poure men, nor of the seruantes of holy chirche, and that be cruelte and couetise makithe do mani euell mordres; as dede that quene that so susteined her husbonde in his foly, thorughe the whiche be felle gret harme. So this is good ensauple to be petous of poure men, and of the seruautes of holy chirche, and not forto atise ne geue euell counsaile to her husbonde; and also not to be disguysed, but to holde the astate of good ladies of her courte; and also not to tempte ne to saie gret wordes \* to a gretter thanne thou art thi self.

so that he  
bade his men  
throw her  
down;

and her body  
was eaten by  
dogs.

This is an  
example to be  
pitiful to  
poor men and  
servants of  
holy church,  
and not to  
say great  
words to a  
greater than  
thyself.

\* [Fol. 29b.  
col. 2.]

## CHAPTER LXVII.

## Of Athaliah, and queen Brunehaut.]

**Y**Et wolle y telle you another ensauple of Eutalia, that was quene of Ierusalem, and was euell and diuerse withouten ani pitee. For whanne Ozias, her childe, was dede, she bi treson made slain alle the children of her sone, and alle the heires, saue only one, that a good man, that was called Joadis, lete norisse priuely. That quene putte her self in possession of the reaulme, and of alle the goodes, and dede mani aduersiteez to the pepille, by tailez and subsidiez, as she was withoute reson and pete. And whanne she had done harme ynow and cruelte in the reaume, the childe that was norissed priuely, and thilke Joadys that had norissed hym, toke her and made her deye an euell and a shamfulle dethe. And so had she rewarde of her merite in the ende. For allewey God yeldithe after the desert on her in the lyff or in the dethe; for there is none euell dede but that it is ponissed ether ferre or nigha.

Of Eutalia,  
queen of  
Jerusalem,  
who had no  
pity, and slew  
all her grand-  
children, save  
one,  
that was hid  
by a good  
man.

And when  
she had done  
harm enough,  
the grandson  
put her to  
death.

God always  
rewards ac-  
cording to  
deserts either  
far or near.

Of queen  
Brunehault  
of France,

who killed  
her children  
and grand-  
children.

But God  
repaid her  
at last;

\* [Fol. 30,  
col. 1.]

for one of the  
children, who  
had escaped,  
called the  
barons to  
judgment on  
her, and she  
was drawn to  
pieces by  
horses.

"So oft  
goeth the pot  
to water, that  
at the last it  
cometh  
broken  
home."

I wol telle you an ensauple of a quene of Fraunce, that was named Brun, and that was the quene of the whiche Sibille spake and profesied, and saide "Brun shalle come into the kingdom of Fraunce that shal do meruailes." And so befelle it, for she made slee of her children, and of the children of her children, and that a gret nombre, and y canne not telle you the halff of her cruelte, nor murdereres, tresones, and ocasiones that she had done. But she was paid, as it plesed to God, atte the last. For a \* childe of her childe, that scaped alyue, the whiche knew the gret euell dedes and crueltees that she had done, he putte her dedes in iugement afore the baronis of the londe, and she was iuged to be distroied, and drawen to peses with hors. And so was it done. And she deyed an euell dethe, and wikedly, as she euell and cruelly made deye the innocent kingges blode. And therfor, in olde Englisshe, it is saide that "so ofte gothe the potte to water that atte the laste it comithe broken home."

## CHAPTER LXVIII.

### [Of Envy.]

Of Miriam,  
the sister of  
Moses,

who dis-  
pleased God  
by her envy  
of her brother,  
and was  
punished by  
leprosy.

An example  
of the evil  
of envy.

I wolte telle you an ensauple upon enuye, of Marie, Moyses sister, that for enuye that she was not as wel beloued of God as her brother Moyses, and that God herde not as welle her request as Moyses, and therfor she had enuye and despite of her brother, of the whiche she had displesaunce to God, and he made her become meselle, so that she was putte away, and departed from alle the pepille. But neuertheles, Moyses and Aaron had pitee of her, and made praier to God that hym liked to hele her, and atte thaire request she was hole. So take here an ensauple that it is euell to haue enuye upon other, and how God ponissed this woman that was the most noblest that was in that tyme, that she was departed from alle other pepille by the meselrye. For often tymes God ponissed so the enuyous and the euell spekers. And therfor, faire doughtres, take here a good ensauple that it is vilanous a vice to enhaunce hem self for to \* blame and bringe downe another.

\* [Fol. 30,  
col. 2.]

## CHAPTER LXIX.

## [Of one of the wives of Arthana.]

I wolde ye knewe another ensauple upon this matere, of one of the wiffes of a gret lorde that was called Arthana, the whiche had .ij. wiffes after the custume at that tyme, of the whiche, one was called Phanona, and that other Ama; the whiche Ama was a worthi lady and a good, but she might haue no children by her husbonde. And in that tyme were most preised they that bare children, of the whiche the woman that hadde children had gret pride that she hadde so mani faire children, and therfor she had of that other wyff despite, enuye, and disdayne, and mocked her in saying gret velanies, and saide that she was bareyne, and dede erthe, of the whiche she had gret shame, and wepte often tymes, and compleyned her to God, and made gret sorw. And God, that se her mekenesse and lownesse and the pride, enuye, and despite of that other wyff, he made deye alle the children of that other wiff, and to her that hadde no children gaue gret plente, for the whiche her husbonde toke her in gret loue, and helde her more dere thanne that other wiff, whos children were dede. And therfor the iugementis of God are merueilous, for he hatithe alle manere of enuye, and chastisithe doun, whanne hym luste, the enuyous, and he exhaunsithe the meke, that besechithe his grace and mercy. And therfor it is a good ensauple that no woman shulde be proude of the goodes and graces that God hathe sent her, nor haue enuye nor despit \* upon other, as hadde Phanona that had children, the whiche had enuie and despite upon Ama, the whiche had none. And therfor God punisshithe her upon her children, that alle deyde, and gaue vnto that other mani, that leued. Suche be the iugementis of God. And therfor men shulde take good ensauple, and thanke God of his goodnesse and gentilnesse, and to haue none enuye nor despite. Now wille y leue this matere, and speke of another, upon couetise.

Of Arthana, who had two wives,

of whom one, Ama, had no children,

and was therefore mocked by the other wife, Phanona.

But God, to reward her meekness, gave her many children, while the children of Phanona died.

An example that no woman should be proud of what God hath given her.

\* [Fol. 306. col. 1.]

Men should take good example, and thank God of goodness, and not be envious.

Now will I speak of covetousness.

## CHAPTER LXX.

## [Of Covetousness.]

Of Dalilah the  
wife of Sam-  
son,

to whom,  
through love  
of her, he told  
that his  
strength lay  
in his hair.

And she, for  
greed of  
money,

cut off his  
hair,  
and gave him  
to his enemies,  
\* [Fol. 306.  
col. 2.]

who bound  
him, put out  
his eyes, and  
made him  
turn a mill.

Covetousness  
makes lords  
rapacious,  
clerks to do  
simony,  
citizens to be  
usurers,  
maids and  
wives to be  
strumpets,

I wolde telle you an ensauple of a fals woman that was called Dalide, that was wiff to Sampson forte, the whiche loued her merueilously, in so moche that he dede no thinge but that she wost therof. And for the gret loue that he had to her, he was so folisshe that he discouered hym to her that alle the strengthe was in the here of his hede. And whanne the fals woman knewe that, she tolde it to the payens that were his enemys, that yef thei wolde geue her a good rewarde she wolde make hem take her husbonde. And the payens behight her that yef she might do it, that she shulde haue a gret somme of moneye. And she, that was gretly enfecte with couetise, thorughe her large proferes, ouercame her husbonde with wyne and flatering langage, that she made hym slepe in her lappe. And, the mene while that he slepte, she share of and cut away the heres of his hede, and sent for the payens, the whiche she hadde hidde in a busschement for hym,\* and made hym there to be taken. And whanne he awoke, he fonde that he had lost his strengthe, for tofore hande he was mighti ynow to haue foute with .iiij. M<sup>l</sup> men, and whan he was taken into her hondes he hadde no might to defend hym, but they bonde hym, and putte oute hys eyen, and made hym turne in a mille hous as a blynde hors. Now beholde how, thorughe couetise of a lytelle golde, that wiked woman betrayed her husbonde, the whiche was most douted and most vaillaunt of alle erthely creatoures, notwithstandinge the gret loue and truste that he had unto her. Truly couetyse is in euery persone a right abhominable synne. For the couetous hert dare wel vndertake to do gret folyes and inconueniantis. For couetise makithe lordes to do rapine, extorcion, and tyrannye upon the pepille; and clerke and religieux to do symonie, and to draw to hem other mennys goodes by fals symoniez and proactiques; burgeys and other to be vsereres; pore men to be theues and murdereres; maydenes and wedues to be strompetys; children to desire the dethe of the fader and

moder, forto haue thaire good al only, and mani other inconueniencis. Judas, sorughe couetise of a litelle siluer, betrayed oure Lorde; and so do now a dayes these aduocates and pledours that sellithe the worlde and langage that God hathe yeuen hem in meyntenaunce of fals quarells, and, for a litelle syluer, to putte a good \* man from his right. And other whiche holdithe on bothe parties for to finde way to gadre money, and in suche wise disposithe the comune langage that God hathe geuen them. And therfor couetise is right deseiuable, thorughe the whiche this Dalida made spille Sampson her husbonde, that was so faire, strong, and mighty. But afterwarde God yelde her that she had deserued, for she was afterwarde wedded to one of the payens, and made a gret and solempne fest, where were assembled moche peple. And by that tyme Sampson here of his hede was growen ayen, and had his strengthe as he hadde afore; and he herde telle of this feste, and lete lede hym vnto the place where it shulde be, and was ladde to the maister pillour of the halle, by the whiche alle the halle was susteined, and toke that pillour with his two hondes, and drow downe that pillour, so that alle the halle felle vpon them. And there was slayne Dalida and the most partie of alle that were atte the weddinge. And so was he venged of that cursed woman, the whiche was slayne in that wise. For God wolde that she were ponished for her cursidnesse, as reson was that for her euille dede she had euel.

and children  
to want their  
father's goods.

Through it  
Judas be-  
trayed our  
Lord,  
as do advo-  
cates that sell  
the language  
that God has  
given them,  
and

\* [Fol. 31,  
col. 1.]

for a little  
silver, put a  
good man  
from his right.

But God re-  
warded Dal-  
lah, for when  
she married  
again, and  
made a great  
feast,

Samson, who  
had become  
strong again,  
came to it,

and pulled  
down the  
house,  
so that she  
and many  
others were  
killed.

## CHAPTER LXXI.

### [Of wrath.]

I wille telle you how, thorughe a litelle wrathe and goinge away of a woman from her husbonde, become a gret sorw and harme. There was a worthi man and noble of the mount of Effram, the whiche was married to a gentille woman of Beleen, and that gentille woman, for a \* litelle wrathe and displeasaunce, that she toke with her husbonde, went sodenly vnto her fader, for the whiche her husbonde was sori, and went after to fet her

How great  
harm came  
from a  
woman's go-  
ing away  
from her  
husband.  
A man of the  
house of  
Ephraim was  
married; and  
his wife  
\* [Fol. 31,  
col. 2.]



for a little  
cause went  
away to her  
father,  
who blamed  
her, and gave  
her back to  
her husband.  
Going home  
together,  
they lodged  
at Gabel,  
where some  
young men  
ravished the  
wife.

And on the  
morrow she  
died for  
sorrow.  
Her husband  
cut her body  
in twelve  
pieces, and  
sent the pieces  
to his friends,

who slew  
33000 of the  
people of  
Gabel.  
\* [Fol. 31b.  
col. 1.]

Therefore,  
every woman  
ought to stay  
with her  
husband, and  
try to please  
him.

ayen. And her fader blamed her gretly that she yede away, and deliuered her unto her husbonde. So her husbonde and she, in retourning towarde thaire home, loged in a toune called Gabel, in the whiche was gret nombre of yonge pepille, wilde and enfecte with lechery, come into the hous where they loged in the night, and toke her from her husbonde by force, and rauissed her velonushly, notwithstanding that their oste, where thei were loged, wolde haue take them one of his doughters to haue forborne and saue the saide gentilwoman, but they wolde for no thing, but toke her forthe and fouled her. And on the morw, whanne she saye her self so shamed and defouled, she deyed for sorughe; and thanne her husbonde toke her forthe with hym home to his place, and cutte her into .xij. peces, and sent euery with lettres to certaine of her frendes, to that entent that thei might be ashamed of her, and of her goinge away. And also that they might haue wille to take vengeance upon hem that dede her that veloni and shame, of the whiche dede, whanne her frendes had knowlage, they made gret sorughe, and assembled hem and alle thaire puissaunce togedre, and yede to the said toune of Gaballe, and slow therfor .xxxij. thousande persones, men and women. Therfor, doughters, \* take hede suche a vengeance was done for that leude dede of her going away; that is to saie, that she was dede, and so mani men slayne, the whiche shulde haue no harme and she had not for wrathe gone away from her husbonde; and mani were slayne for her that hadde no gilt. And therfor euery woman aught to restraine wrathe, and to plesse and suffre her husbonde, and he be wrothe, with faire langage, and not to go away from hym, as dede that woman of the whiche come moche sorughe, as the dethe of her self and of so gret nombre of pepille.

## CHAPTER LXXII.

### [Of a woman who would not obey her husband.]

Of a woman  
that would  
not eat with  
her husband,

I wolde ye knew another ensauple upon the woman that wolde not ete atte the bidding of her husbonde. There was

a lady that wolde not come ete with her husbond whanne he was atte mete for no thyng that he coude saie her nor comaunde her. And he saw that, and whanne he had etin he sent for his swyne herde, and made fette the kichin clothe that his d'sshes were wiped with, and spred it on a borde, and sette mete theron, and made the swyne herthe sitte doun theratte; and thanne he called his lady his wyff, and saide her, "Sethe ye wol not ete in my companie with me, ye shalle sitte downe and ete here with the swyne herthe, for there shal none other man holde you compani at your mete." And whedir she ware wrothe or gladde, he made her sitte doun. And she wepte and made moche sorughe that her husbonde wolde chastise her so, to make her be serued in so ungoodly \* wise. And, therfor, alle women aught to be humble and to fulfelle her husbondes comaundement, and to ete with hym in his presence rather thanne with ani other.

and he made  
her sit at  
met with  
the swine-  
herd.

\* [Fol. 31b.  
col. 2.]  
All women  
should eat  
with their  
husbands.

## CHAPTER LXXIII.

I wolde ye knew an ensauple upon flatering.

There was a gret lorde of Grece that hight Sisana, that yede to a bataile in the whiche he was slayne. And so his moder had gret desire to here tydingges of her sone. And there was a flatering woman with her that saide, "Madame, abasshe you not, for my lorde youre sone hathe had the felde and takin mani prisoners, and he tariethe for the kepinge of hem and deliuraunce." And these flateries plesed the lady with false wordes to make her gladde, as done these flatereres now a dayes among lordes, that tellith not the trouthe to make hem to haue gladnesse of, not as dede this woman to this good lady that saide that her sone had victori, and it was alle the contre he was slayne. And afterwarde, whanne the ladi wost yt, she deyed almost for sorughe. Therfor it is euelle to haue flatererez about a man; for they dare not saie the trouthe nor geue true and iuste counsaile, but bringe thaire lordes and ladies oute of the right waye. So men shulde not leue no

Of the mother  
of a lord of  
Grece, who  
was told he  
was alive  
when he was  
dead,

and almost  
died for  
sorrow when  
she knew the  
truth.  
It is an evil  
to have  
flatterers.

flatereris; for they that dothe, is not but to deceiue and to do plesaunce forto haue good and forto be loued. For ye shulde beter know you yef ye be wise, but ye aught to loue hem that wille telle you youre good, and wille telle you the trouthe.

## CHAPTER LXXIV.

[Fol. 32,  
col. 1.]

I wolde ye herde an ensauple of Sampson the fortis wiff.

Sampson  
made a wager  
with some  
pagans, which  
he lost  
through his  
wife.

THE said Sampson he made a wager with diuers payens of .xxx. gownes of silke, that they shuld not vndo certaine redelles that he declared vnto them. So it happed that his wiff cesed neuer to speke and to crie on hym vnto the tyme that she wost what it was, and, whanne she knewe it, she discoverid her husbonde and made hym lese the .xxx. gownes. And whan her husbonde wist that she had discovered it, he hated her gretly, and putte her away from hym, and went vnto the payens that had wonne the wager, and toke of hem and despoiled them for despite of his wiff. So this is here a good ensauple to a woman that shulde not discover for no thinge the secret nor the counsaile of her husbond, lesse she falle in the yre and hate of hym, as dede this Sampsones wiff; for it is treson whanne a man trustithe in her and she discovered his counsaile, the whiche she is bounde to kepe secrete and priuei.

No woman  
should dis-  
cover her  
husband's  
secrets.

Of a squire  
who told his  
wife he had  
laid two egges,

I wolde you wost the tale of the squier that had a yong wiff, in what wise he said and proued her: "Y wol telle you a gret counsaile, but discover me not for no thinge of this that y saie you, for my worshippe liethe therin, and therfor, for the loue of God, telle it not. There is befallē vnto me suche an auenture, that y haue leide .ij. eggis." And she sware, and assured her husbonde, that she wolde neuer speke therof vnto no creatoure; but hereupon she thought longe tyme til that she might fynde a wey to \*goo vnto her godsib,—“Y wolde telle you a thinge of gret priuete, and ye wille ensure me to holde it counsaile.” And her godsib behight her to do so. “So helpe me so, my dere godsib, there is befallē a merueilous auenture

\* [Fol. 32,  
co 1.2.]

and she told  
her gossip,

vnto my husbonde, for he hathe ylaide .iij. eggis." "A! seint Marie," said this godsib, "this is a gret meruaile, how may it be? it is a straunge thinge!" but, whanne alle was saide, thei departed. And the godsib that hadde herde the wiffes counsaile, in alle haste she gothe forthe vnto another godsib that she had, and tolde euery worde the counsaile that suche a squier had leyde .v. eggis. And in this wise it was reported, furst bi the wiff, and after bi the godsibbes in counsaile from one to an other, till alle the contre spake therof, and that the squier herde of the speche, and how it was renounced that he had leide .v. eggis. And thanne he called his wiff vnto hym before her frendes and her kin, and saide vnto her, "Dame, y tolde you in counsaile suche thinge as ye haue discouered and saide it forthe in suche wise as now alle the contre spekithe therof; for there y tolde you that y had leide .ij. eggis, thanked be God and *your* good report, ye haue encreased hem vnto the noubre of .v. eggis; and, thoughte it be the contrarie of alle that ye haue saide, y feyned suche a thinge and tolde it you in counsaile, and alle was forto preue you how ye wolde kepe myn counsaile as ye be-hight me to do. Wherin y haue founde you of gret defaute, and not true vnto me." And hereupon the wiff was so sore ashamed, that she wost not what \*she might do nor sey, for there was none excusacion in her folye. And bi this ensauple alle good women aught to be ware and auised that they discouer not the counsaile of her husbonde, but euer more, as she is y-bounde, to kepe his counsaile and fulfelle his comaundement. Faire doughtres, y shal telle you an ensauple.

The gossip repeated the tale to others, and spoke of five eggis.

At last the squire heard of it, and reproved his wife before her family,

saying he had feigned the story to prove how she would keep his counsel.

\* [Fol. 32b. col. 1.]

## CHAPTER LXXV.

**Of Michelle, the wife of David, that was an holy man, and loued God aboute alle thinge.**

**I**T befel atte a gret feste, whiche was made before the arke after the custume of the Iues, in the whiche arke was manna wherewith the children of Israel were refeccioned as it

At a great feast before the Ark of God,

King David  
sang with the  
priests at the  
altar ;

for which his  
wife scorned  
him,

and dis-  
pleased both  
God and her  
husband.

\* [Fol. 325.  
col. 2.]

All women  
should be  
humble and  
courteous to  
their hus-  
bands.

reyned down from heuene unto hem, and there was therein also the table of the law and the yerde wherewith Moyses departed the see. And for to worship God, kinge Dauid putte him self in the temple amonge the preestis, for to harpe and to singe with hem before the auuter. And his wyff beholdinge hym in such wise amonge the prestis, she disdeyned thereatte, and had scorne thereof, and scornfully she saide that hym semed beter to be a mynstrelle thanne a kinge. And as sone as Dauid had vnderstonde that she hadde spoken in suche wise, he answered her, there was no kinge nor quene to good to serue God, nor worthi therto but thorughe his goodnesse, and more a kinge is bounde to obey and serue God thanne another symple creature. So that it displeased bothe vnto God and vnto her husbonde of that she had do and saide, in so \* moche that from that tyme forthe her husbonde escheued her cumpany, and she fel vnto gret disese and sikenesse ; for God sheued her gret punissyon for her pride and foly. For euery good woman owithe to move and excite her lorde and husbonde unto the seruice of God, for alle good and worships that man or woman hathe it comithe of God. And therfor alle suche as loue to serue God and holi chirche, thei aught to be preised ; and mainly a woman vnto her husbonde shulde not iape nor scorne hym for no manere of thinge. And yef she had cause to speke of ani thing, she owithe to speke it in priuite and in goodly wyse vnto her husbonde, and neither to ansuere nor to saie no thinge in the presence of the peple vnto his displeaunce, for doute of mani gret inconueniencys, as the wise man saithe, "the displesaunt seruice or vngoodly ansuere of a woman vnto her husbonde is cause and deceperacion of the loue betwene hem, and causithe the man forto be yrouis and cruel in worde and dede." And therfor, faire daughters, bi this ensaample take hede how alle good women owe to be humble, curteis, and seruisable vnto her husbondes.

## CHAPTER LXXVI.

## Another ensaunple of Bersabe the wiff of Vrie.

**T**His Bersabe duelled before the paleis of kinge David, and, as she kembed her hede atte a wyndow, the kinge perceiued her. And she, was right faire merueylously in every beaute that longithe to woman, wherwith the kinge was gretly tempted, and sent for her and <sup>1</sup>[so moche he dyde that he laye with her, and, bycause of the folyssh plesaunce and delyte that he toke with her, he dyde send his lettres to Joab, whiche was chyuetayne and capitayn of his hoost, that he sholde put Vrye in suche place that he myht be slayne. Vrye bare hym self the lettres of his dethe, for in certayne it was done as the kynge \*had wreton. And thus kynge Dauyd made double synne, for an homycyde he was, and hadde accomplysshed and done the synne of lecherye. Wherfor God was displeased, and sente to hym and to his reame many euyles, wherof the nombre were to longe to reherce ; and all this meschyef cam by the pryde that Bersabee had of her herte. Therfore a woman ought not to be proude of ony beaute that she hath and shewe her self only to please the world.

Bathsheba dwelt before the palace of David, who saw her,

[Caxton, g. iii. b.]

and lay with her, and had her husband killed.

\* [g. iiij.]

But God was displeased, and sent many evils to him and his realm, in punishment.

## CHAPTER LXXVII.

## The demaunde or asking that the moder of Salamon made.

**T**He moder of kynge Salamon, whiche was a good lady, dyde requyre of Salamon her sone that he wold graunte and fyaunce her to a man whiche was a paynym and theyr enemye. Salamon ansuerd that this enemy shold neuer haue the wyf of his lord, his fader. She held her thenne for nyce and ashamed of that she had be warned of her demaunde and requeste. Therfor euery woman ought to thynke, or she requyte her lord of ony thyng, yf her requeste be resonable or not. I wold ye knewe the folysshe requeste which the duchesse of Athenes

Solomon's mother wanted him to consent to her marrying a pagan ; but he would not.

A duchess of Athens had a bastard son,

<sup>1</sup> Here follows a lacuna in the MS., which is supplied from Caxton's translation.

for whom she desired his sister for a wife, made to the duke her lord. She had a bastard sone, and therfor she made her requeste to her lord, that he myght haue to his wyf his owne suster. And the duk, that sawe her symplenes, beganne to lawghe, and dissymyled her requeste, and but the duke would not; sayd that he shold speke with his frendes of it. She thenne, that wold fayne haue sene this maryage to be couenaunced and graunted, rested not to speke to her lord of it tylle at the laste he sayd to her that it shold not be done; wherfore she tooke suche a sorowe in her herte that she laye seke therof. The duk prayd her, and also made her to be prayd by other, to come & lye with hym, but she wold not. Wherfore the duke was wrothe, & he sware and sayd that neuer she shold lye in his bedde, and made her to be conueyed in a castel. Here is thenne a good ensample how a woman ought to be ware her self that she requyre not her lord of nothyng vnresonable or dishonest, & hou that she must obeye hym, & not do lyke as the duchesse of Athenes did, wherfor her lord exyled & put her fro hym.

wherefore she was sick for grief,

so that her lord was wroth, and sent her away from him.

## CHAPTER LXXVIII.

## The Iugement of the kynge Salamon.

[g. iij. b.]  
Two women lodged in one house, and the child of one was killed.  
She took the child of the other woman;  
whence came a strife between them.

**I** Wille telle yow an ensample of a fals woman. Two wymmen were somtyme, whiche bothe were lodged in one hows, and eche of them had a sone, whiche children were bothe seke and bothe borne vpon one daye. It befell on a nyght that one of them was by auenture smouldred. His moder, that sawe hym dede, went anone as a fals woman and toke the other child whiche lyued, & in hir cradell leyd her sone whiche was dede, and he that lyued she leyd in her cradel. And thenne whanne the other woman cam to see and take heed to her child and sawe hym that was dede, she anon knewe that it was not her sone; wherof sourded a grete content and stryf bytwene these two wymmen, in so moche that the cause and matere was brought tofore Salamon. And after he had herd their debate and stryf, he sayd, "Lete a swerd be brought hyder, and I

shalle parte this child in two, and gyue to eche of them one half." She to whome the child apperteyned not answerd and sayd she was content; and she that was moder of the child sayd, "Rather than it shold be done, I have leuer to quytte yow and gyue yow my parte, soo that his lyf may be saued." Thenne the kynge iuged that the child shold be gyuen to her that wold haue hym to be saued; and soo was the treason of the fals woman approued and knowen.

King Solomon ordered the living child to be divided between the women, but the true mother would not consent; so the king gave her her child.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

How the synne of the fader is noyus to his children.

**A**NOTHER ensample was of the wyf of kynge Roboam. She had a child whiche was seke, wherfor the kyng sente the quene to a holy prophete to praye hym that he wold impetre to God the helthe of theyr child. The quene wente to hym, and as she was come tofore the dore of his hows, and or euer he sawe her, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, he knewe what she was, and also what she wold, and sayd to her with a hyghe voys, "Quene, wyf to Roboam, your sone deyd \* this nyght of a good dethe. But alle thyne other children shalle deye of euylle dethe, bycause of the synne of theyr fader, thyn husbond, whiche is a tyraunt ouer his peple, lecherous, & of euylle consyence." The quene wente ageyne homeward, and fonde her sone cold and dede, and told her lord what he hadde sayd, but therfor he amended hym not. Wherfor perysshed alle his children. And thus is here a good ensample to vse and kepe honeste lyf, and to loue and kepe in ryght his peple, and not greue them as Roboam dyd. For the synne of the fader and moder is noyous to the children, as ye haue herd before.

The wife of King Rehoboam went disguised to the Prophet, to ask about her sick child;

but he knew her, and said her son was dead,

\* [g. v.]

and that her other children should die because of their father's sin.

For the sin of parents injures the children.



## CHAPTER LXXX.

## How none ought to repreue other of his meschyef.

Anna, the  
wife of To-  
bias, spoke  
foolishly to  
her husband,

\* [Fol. 33,  
col. 1.]

who was  
blind for a  
long time ;

and for his  
patience God  
gave him  
again his  
sight.

Another  
example of  
Rachel, who  
had seven  
husbands  
whom the  
devil took for  
their wicked-  
ness, and she  
bore the  
blame of it  
meekly,

for which  
God re-  
warded her  
by giving her  
Tobias for a  
husband.

\* [Fol. 33,  
col. 2.]

I shall telle you another ensample how Anna, the wyf of Thoby, spake folysshly to her lord, whiche was a good and a hooly man, and buryed the dede bodyes which a paynym made to be slayn in the despyte of God and of his lawe, the whiche was callyd Senacherib.]... \* holy name. It befelle that upon a tyme the dunge of swalues felle into the eyen of this good man Tobie, wherof that he was longe tyme blynde, and in despite hereof his wiff saide vnto hym that the God for whom he had beried so mani dede men shulde yelde hym ayen his sight. And the good man answered her ayen in gret pacience, that alle was in the plesaunce of God ; and wherupon it befelle that she thereafter was gretly punisshed with diuerse maladies, and whanne it plesed vnto God he yalde ayen the sight vnto this good man. And bi this ensample no goode woman shulde not despise nor speke vnkindely unto her husbonde, ne sette the lasse bi hym for ani sikennesse that God sendithe ; for the honde of God is as wellevpon hem that be hole as upon hem that be sike, as ye haue herd bi Tobie, that was made hole of his sight, and his wiff that spake euell was made sike. Wherof y wolde that ye knewe an other ensample of Raguelle, that had .vij. husbondes, whiche the deuell slow alle, for as moche as they vsed unkindely werke, whiche as be not for to be reherced. And this good woman undertoke and blamed atte a tyme her godsib, secretly betwene hem bothe, of an euell dede that she had do, but she, that was ferce and proude, reproued her opinly of her .vij. husbondes. And the good woman answered no thinge ayen, but alle in pacience and began to wepe, saieng she might not do therto, and that God dothe alle atte his plesaunce. And whanne God sawe her humilite, he gaue her the yonge Tobbye to husbonde, and they had children and \* moche worshipec togedre. And she that had chidde with her before and reproued her, hadde moche shame and euell ende. And the good woman had

worshippe and good in gret habundaunce, and therfor it is good ensauple that none shulde reproche atte otheres blame nor harme, for the veniaunce, punissiones, and the iugementis of God be meruailous. And suche ofte putte gret blame in other, which as God punnisshethe after with gret veniaunces.

God punishes  
those who  
blame others.

**And yet y wolle telle you an other ensauple upon  
the vertu of pacience.**

Ye haue welle herde as upon that as tellithe the Bible, how God wolde and sufferithe Iob, that was an holy man, to be tempted, and to falle from gret highe worshippe and richesse unto lowe astate and thereto pouerte, as he that was as mighti as riche as a kinge; furst, how he lost is .vij. sones and .iiij. doughtres, after alle his bestailes and richesces, and alle his faire duellinge places ybrent, so that there belefte hym no thinge saue only hym selff and his wiff. And in so moche that for his gret pouerte he had no loginge nor duellinge place but upon a donghille, wherewith he hadd also gret sikenesse, maladie, and lacke of sustenaunce. And but as his wiff, with the releef of that that pepille gaue vnto her, she susteyned his lyff in moche tribulacion and anguisshe of pouerte, wherethorughe that upon a tyme she waxe inpaciens and wrathe, by temptacion of the fende,<sup>1</sup> and saide vnto her husbonde, "Sire, deie here upon this donghille, and blame God of \* this dissese, sen ye mow have no beter." And the good man ansuered her in this manere paciently, "As it plesithe vnto God, so mote it be; for God yeuith alle, and God may take alle, and euer more ythanked be God, and blessed be his name." Nor neuer, for sorw nor annoy that God sende hym, he saide neuer other wise, but euer thanked God in gret pacience; for there was neuer dissese that he suffered that made hym impacient, but atte alle tymes he thanked God. And whanne almighti God had so assaied and proued hym, and his gret humilite and pacience, he redressed alle, and gaue hym as moche honoure, worship, richesse, and prosperite, as he had before in alle manere wise. And as

Job fell from  
great riches

to poverty  
and sickness.

But when  
his wife urged  
him to blame  
God, he  
would not;

\* [Fol. 33b.  
col. 1.]

saying God  
gave all, and  
might take  
all;

and God  
rewarded his  
patience by  
restoring to  
him all he  
had lost.

<sup>1</sup> 'Of the fende' repeated in the MS.

Saint Eustatius lost lands, wife, and child, but God after gave him more than he had before;

\* [Fol. 336. col. 2.]

an example of the reward God gives to patience and humility.

this befelle in the olde testament, right so it befelle in the nwe testament; as ye shalle finde in the legende of seint Eustace, that loste londes, goodes, wiff, and child, wel nigh the space of .xiiij. yere; and afterward God releuithe and restored hym ayen his wiff, his children, and alle hys goodes, in more prosperite [and] worldely worshippe thanne euer he had before that tyme. And therfor here is a good ensauple that no creature shulde disease other, for no aduersitee that God sendithe, for there is no man wotithe the fortunes nor auentures cominge, or what shalle befall, for that is in the knowinge and sufferance of God. And for ani tribulacion that may befall, euermore man is ybound to thanke God, and to resseue alle in pacience, with faithefulle hope in the mercy and grace of God, as ye may see the ensauple here of Job and seint \* Eustace, that suffered mani tribulaciones, pouertees, and aduersitees, and alleway thei wost welle in thare thought and beleue that it was in the might of God to releue and forto store hem vnto the double, whanne it liked hym of his grace. Lo, thus may ye see and know the gret merite and rewarde that longithe vnto these vertues, pacience, humilite, and good hope, and euermore atte alle tymes Iob thanking and seruing God.

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

### [Of King Herod and Herodias.]

Herodias was an evil woman, whom her brother-in-law Herod took from her husband;

**A**NOTHER ensauple y wille telle you of an euell woman, Herodias, whiche king Herode helde and withdrow from his brother, her husbonde, that was a symple man. But kinge Herode was diuerse, couettous, and right malicious, and this was he that made slee the innocens, weninge forto haue slaine the almighti kinge Ihesu. For whan the sterre made demonstraunce of his birthe, wherof Herode hadde gret feere that suche lynige shulde take away from hym his reame; and therfor he made slee alle the yong children innocens. And also he was falce and traytour vnto his owne brother, in withholdynge and kepinge hys wyff from hym, ayenst God and the lawe. Whanne seint

Iohne the baptist reproveth of that foule synne, and the false woman Herodias, for hate and despite that she had vnto seint Iohne, because he blamed her and preched ayenst her synne, she purchased his dethe of Herodes. This was a diuerse and a false woman, and so he hadde an euell ende, and her fals lorde Herode also, for he deide of gret veniaunce, that smale \*wormes slow hym as he slow small children, yong innocens. And right so it plesed vnto God that he shulde deye vengeably, bi the leste quicke thing that might be, as bi smale wormes in his hondes, in alle his membres and body, that ete hym, and made hym forto deye. Lo, thus y haue spoke vnto you of diuerse women that were not good, as it is continued in the Bible, and forto be ensauple vnto you and other, that ye may be ware do none euell; and so y shal now entrete and telle you of a good woman, the whiche holy scripture preisith gretly. And therfor it is good to remembre and to recorde the condicions of the good, in ensauple to other by thaire vertu; for the good dedes in vsaunce of hem that were good is a faire mirrour and gret ensauples vnto women that be now, and also for hem that shulle be hereafter: whereof the furst

and when  
St. Iohn  
blamed them,  
she had him  
put to death.

\* [Fol. 34,  
col. 1.]  
And Herod  
died the  
slowest death  
possible, by  
small worms  
in his body.

Good dedes  
are as a  
mirror and  
example to  
those who  
come after.

## CHAPTER LXXXII.

Ensauple is of Sarra whom the scripture hathe  
in gret recomendacion.

Sarra was wiff vnto Abraham, and she was bothe good and wise, and God kepte her from mani periles; for whanne king Pharaos toke her bi strengthe, God sende hym mani sorues, sikenneses, and mischeues, vnto the tyme that he had deliuered and restored her ayen vnto her husbonde. And so God kepte and saued her, thorughe his goodnesse and her holy praiers, as he hathe kepte and saued mani holy men and women from water, from dethe of suerd, and from many other turmentys, as it is conteyned in the legende of the \*lyff of seintes. This Sarra suffered mani shames and mani sorues, and she was an hundred yere baraine of childe beringe, but for the ferme faithe and the

Sarra was  
the wife of  
Abraham,

whom God  
kept for her  
goodness,

\* [Fol. 34,  
col. 2.]  
and when  
she was one  
hundred

years old, He  
gave her a  
child.

trouthe that she had alwey vnto her husbonde, and for her gret humilite, God gaue her grace to conceiue a faire childe, whiche was after an holy man, and that was Ysaac, of whom that come the .xij. linages whiche God gaue vnto hym for the bounte of his true moder.

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

[Of Rebecca the wife of Jacob.]

Rebecca was  
a woman of  
great faith  
and humility,

**A**NOTHER ensauple y shal telle you, of Rebecca, whiche was a woman of gret goodnesse and passingly fairenesse, and fulle of alle vertuous condicion. And this Rebecca praisithe gretly holy scripture, as to be faithefulle and humble, and she was wiff vnto Ysaac, moder vnto Iacob, as the scripture witnessithe, and how she loued and honoured her husbonde aboue alle thingges. And she kepte her selff euer more curteys, and so humble and so plesaunt of ausuere vnto her husbonde, that as the dethe she dede to do hym plesauce, or to make hym wrothe, so that, bi gret humilite that was in her, she semed beter to haue be the seruauant or the chambrere of the hous thanne for to haue be the ladie or maistresse. And she was longe tyme baren, but God, that louithe truthe and holy mariage, and for the gret humilite of her, he sent her .ij. children, whiche were yborne atte one tyme, and that one was Esaw and that other Iacob; whiche Iacob hadde .xij. sones that were the princes of .xij. lynages, wherof the \* pistelle upon the feest of Alhalwynne makithe mencion. And this Rebecca loued best her sone Iacob and she made hym bi her gret wysdom to haue the blessinge of his fader, bicause he coude best cheuisshe hym selff, and was of good puruiauance, and in that she was like vnto the condicion of a lyonesse, that louithe the faon beste of her bringinge forthe, that canne leue by praye, and puruey for hym selff. For Iacob was of gret prudence, and Esaw loued huntyng for the venison, and to pley and to chace for the wylde beestis in the forest. So that the childe of one fader and of one moder be not of one condition, but they loue and desire eche contrarie unto other.

and God, to  
reward her,  
gave her two  
children.

\* [Fol. 34b.  
col. 1.]

She loved  
Jacob the  
better, and  
made him to  
obtain the  
blessing of  
his father;

for the chil-  
dren of the  
same parents  
are often  
different in  
mind.

I shalle telle you an ensauple of a good man and of a good woman, that were longe tyme togedre and thei might haue no children, and atte the laste God sent hem a childe of gret fairenesse, and before that thei hadde ani childe they hadde promessed vnto God that thei wolde yeue her furst childe vnto the seruice of God and vnto holy chirche. And after that thei had another childe, that was not so faire, and thanne thei chaunged her purpose, and wolde putte the childe that was not so faire vnto the seruice of the chirche, and thei wolde withholde the fairest to be thaire heyre. Whereof God was displeased, and toke away from hem bothe her children; nor neuer afterwarde they hadde no mo children, wherof they had gret soru and displesaunce, but God \*lete hem wete bi the prophete the cause and occasion thereof. So that bi this it is good ensauple how in what wise no creatoure shulde make no promesse vnto God, but suche as they wolde truli holde, for God may not be scorned nor deceiued, as he that wolde haue geue hym the foulest and haue kepte the fairest for hym self. For there shal neuer come no welthe vnto hem that do in suche wise, as to avowe her children vnto God and holy chirche for to be religious, and after to withdrawe hem therfrom. Wherof y haue sayne these ensauples bi mani that haue be withdrawe oute of abbeyes, for thaire londes and gret reuenus that haue befall vnto hem after the decease and dethe of thaire kynne and frendes; and alle it causithe couetise, that hathe made hem for to leue thaire religiouse. They haue hadde afterwarde therfor euell ende and shamfulle, as men or women that haue lyued in vnclene lyff ayenst the promesse and behest the whiche they had made vnto almighti God, by the aduise of her frendes and thaire wilful consenting.

A good man and woman had no children, but when in old age God sent them a son, they offered him to the Church; but when they had another son not so fair, they gave him to God instead, wherefore God was angry and took away both.

\* [Fol. 34b. col. 2.]

This is an example of what is often seen now, when many withdraw from abbeyes when they become rich.

#### CHAPTER LXXXIV.

[Of Leah the wife of Jacob.]

I wolle telle you the ensauple of Alia the wiff of Iacob. The Bible praysithe her moche, and saithe that she loued her husbonde souerainly, and was of grete humblesse vnto hym, with

The Bible praiseth Leah for her humility to her husband.

And God  
gave her  
twelve sons ;

\* [Fol. 35,  
col. 1 ]

a good ex-  
ample that  
all parents  
should pray  
for their  
children,

and not curse  
them, as a  
man and  
woman once  
did their son,

when the  
devil seized  
the child by  
the armes,  
\* [Fol. 35,  
col. 2.]  
and burnt  
him.

alle the reuerence that she coude, euermore atte alle tymes. And whanne she hadde childed, she thanked God with gret lowlynesse and deuocion. And therfor God gaue her the .xij. princes, of the whiche there come .xij. lignes, the whiche were good and worthi men, and loued and \*dredde God aboue alle thinges. And thaire fader and moder praied for them euery day whiles thei were yonge, that God wolde puruey for them thorughe his highe grace in suche wise as they might euermore continue in her true seruice ; and therfor thei were holy folke, and they were worshipped before alle other. So here is a good ensauple that eueriche fader and moder is beholde to praie for her children in the wise as the said Iacob and Alia praied vnto God. For y lete you wete that neuer, for defaute nor riotte that her children trespassed not unto them, they cursed hem not atte no tyme, but blamed hem with correccion as belongithe vnto fader and moder to do vnto thaire childe ; for an hundred tyme were it beter to bete the childe thanne for to curse hym at ani tyme, for of cursinge befallithe mani diuerse perilles, wherof y shalle telle you an ensauple of a woman that was frowarde and angri of lyght to displesaunce, and she had an husbonde of the same condicion. And so they had a sone that hadde do a defaute ayenst hem bothe, wherfor that thei cursed hym, and the childe that was yonge and of litelle cunnynge wratthed atte hem cursyng, and answered his fader and moder impaciently and folyly, wherof the fader and moder were bothe yrous so felle and displesed, bothe atte ones thai betoke hym and gaue hym vnto the deuelle of helle, and alle sodenly the foule anemy cesed the childe by the armes and lefte hym up from the erthe. And ouer alle where as the deuelle had touched the childe, the fere \*fastened upon hym in suche wise that the childe loste his membres, and was euermore afterwarde disfigured. And therfor it is gret perille for fader and moder to curse her children, ne forto destenie hem vnto any wicked thinge, or forto yeue hem vnto the foule fende, that is enemye and aduersarie to alle mankynde. And therfor take here a good ensauple, and bethenke in what wise ye be, ye owe to praie for youre childe vnto God, as Iacob and Alia

praied that God wolde yeue his children lynce and generacion and multiplicacion and enhauncinge vnto his glorie and worshiþe; and do not as the man and woman folýly for thaire wrathe to curse thaire sone, & to yeue hym vnto the deuelle of helle, wherof the childe was euer after in perille alle hys lyff.

## CHAPTER LXXXV.

[Of Rachel the second wife of Jacob.]

**A**NOTHER ensauple y shalle telle you of Racel, the seconde wiff of Iacob, that was moder vnto Ioseph, that solde his bretherin in Egipte. Of her spekithe the holy scripture how truly that she loued her husbonde, and of the gret obeysaunce that she was vnto hym. So she was moder vnto the said Ioseph, of whom she deyed in gesyne. And hit is saide that it was because of the pride and ioye that she hadde of her childe, and thanked not God deuoutly of her childinge, as Alya the furst wiff hadde ydo. And therfor here is a good ensauple vnto women in what wise thei owe to worship, to thanke, and to praise God of hys yefte of grace that sendithe hem good auenture of her childinge and in her guyses. \*As a noble lady that was quene of Hungri, that atte the tyme whanne she shulde trauaile of childe, she sent vnto the collages vnto the holy peple to praie for her and her childe, and after the childes birthe the childe thanking and preisinge vnto almighti God of his priuilege that had youre grace, helthe, and prosperite, unto her and her childe. And, atte the day of her reuelle and purification, that she shulde be cherished, she lete it be do simply withoute gret noye, but sent for pore pepille, and gaue hem gode to worship God and to praie for her childe. And this good ladi offered her owne childe atte the auuter before God, besechinge hym with gret humilite and deuocion that wolde multeplie her childe in his grace and loue of the pepille, and in this wise, thorughe the good praiers of the moder, al her children were enhaunced vnto gret worshippe and grace before God and the worlde, and thus, bi uertu and humilite of this noble lady, alle her children come vnto gret noblesse. Wherby ye may see how God is pleased

Rachel was the mother of Joseph,

and she died in child-bearing because she thanked not God.

\* [Fol. 355. col. 1.]

A queen of Hungary, when she had children, had holy people to pray for her and the child.

And they all came to great nobility.



The Son of  
God came to  
the Virgin  
Mary,

as a reward  
for her meek-  
ness and  
chastity.

\* [Fol. 35b.  
col. 2.]

with deuoute praiers and of humble creatoures, for, of trouthe, the sone of the fader of heuene descended from aboue into the glorious uirgine Marie as moche for her humilite as for the chastite; for alle be it that she was pure, chaste, and clene, withoute ani synne, so was she the most meke and humble of all creatoures, as it shewithe whan she conceyued oure Saueoure Ihesus by the annunciacion angelyk, where as she said her selff "Teche lo me, the \* humble chaumbrere of God, his wille and plesaunce be fulfilled in me."

## CHAPTER LXXXVI.

### [Of the queen of Cyprus.]

In their old  
age the king  
and queen of  
Cyprus had a  
son ;

and they  
made a great  
feast, at  
which the  
child was  
smothered ;

an example  
of the folly  
of such vain  
\* [Fol. 36,  
col. 1.]  
glory and  
feasting.

AND also ye shulle understonde, bi another ensaunple whiche y shalle telle you of the quene of Cipre, she might haue no childe, and she was of gret age ; how be atte the laste, thorughe good praiers of her and of her husbonde, God sende hem a faire sone, wherof there was made gret ioye thorughe alle the reaume. And of the gret ioye that thei had they made crie festis and iustis. And thei sent for alle the gret lordes and ladies that might come to the feste, where there was gret noveltee and plente of riches, so that alle was fulfilled with ioye and melodie of mynstrelle. And the fest was fulfilled and acomplet in eueri wise, as longed vnto the hyennesse of the birthe of the kingges childe. But how it befelle that for the excessive vayne glorie of the birthe that was made of the childe, & not thankinge God duly, deuoutly, and humbly, as the king and the quene shulde haue do in yelding prasing vnto almighti God, it happed that, whanne thei were atte dyner in her most ioye, the childe deyde, bicause it was saide the childe was ouercharged with couerture. And whanne this was opened, know, and tolde thorughe the kingges court, al they that were before in gret ioye and gladnesse, al sodenly it was turned into sorw and heynesse, and so thei departed. And, therfor, here is an ensaunple how there aught not to be no suche fayne glories atte festis for the birthe of \* the childe, but prasinge and thankyng vnto God, praieng hym deuoutly to perfourme his

creatoure by his grace vnto good lyff and good ende; for God yeuith and sendithe where hym plesithe, bi praier and good levinge, and he withdrawithe his grace and shortithe the lyff of men and women and childe, bycause of synne.

## CHAPTER LXXXVII.

[Of the daughter of Pharaoh.]

I Shalle telle you an ensauple upon a good dede of charitee of a kingges daughter, that norisshed Moyses, so as y shalle saie you after the Iues, that were the pepille of God, thei were in seruage as prisoners in Egipte, where Pharo was kinge. And bycause that he sawe the pepille of Iues multiply gretly, the said king Pharoo had gret displeaunce therof, and comanded to slee alle the children excepte one. And whan the moder of Moyses saw that her childe must be deliuered vnto the dethe, she putte her childe in a vessel within a ryuer, and lete hym dryue foorth with the streame, and went bi auenture where it plesed vnto God, as she that had gret pitee and sorw, and hadde leuer to putte her childe in the hande of God thanne to see hym be slayne before her. And so it plesed vnto God the vesselle aryued before the chaumbre of the daughter of king Pharoo, within a lytelle yle, where as the kyngges daughter and other ladies were in her disport and playeng, and sawe the vesselle aryue fast bi hem, and the kingges daughter with her women thei went unto the vesselle, where thei fonde a yonge childe of gret fairenesse. Wherof the kingges \* daughter had bothe pitee and ioye, and bare the childe with her, and made hym to be norisshed in her garderober, and called hym in bourde her sone, of the whiche childe there come moche welthe afterwarde. For God ches and ordeyned hym to be maister and gouernour of his peple, and shewid hym mani of his secres, and toke hym the yeerde wherewith he departed the see, and wherewith also he made the water to come oute of the stone. And also he toke hym the tables of the lawe, and shewed hym mani mo secrete thinges, for the loue that God had unto hym. But for the nori-

Moses was saved and kept by the princess of Egypt:

for his mother put him in a boat on a river,

where the princess found him;

\* [Fol. 36, col. 2.]

and afterwards God ordained him to be leader of His people.

God forgetteth not to reward charity to orphans.

The child of a good woman fell into a deep pit in the river,

where Saint Elizabeth kept him alive for eight days,  
\* [Fol. 36b. col. 1.]

until his mother found him;

another example that charity is always rewarded.

ture and service that this lady had ydo vnto Moyses, she was right welle rewarded, for God forgetithe not the service that is do by waye of charitee and in reuerence vnto hym, as for to norisshe orphelyns and for to endoctrine hem in vertu and science.

Ther was a goodly lady that hadde but a yonge childe vnto her sone, that wente forto bathe hym, and happed to plunge and to falle in a depe pitte withinne the ryuer, where as he was .viij. dayes. And the moder that had loste the childe was charitable, and, in the reuerence of God and of seint Elizabeth, had norissed before mani pore children that were faderles and moderles. So it befelle that the .viij. night the moder dremed that her sone was in a depe pitte fulle of water, and how seint Elizabeth kepte hym, and speking vnto her in this wise, "That for as moche as ye haue be pitous, and norissed pore orphelyns, God wille not \*that youre childe deye nor perisshe; wherfor drawe hym oute of the pitte where as he is." And hereupon the moder arose, and as she had dremed, she went, and had her childe hole and quicke oute of the depe pitte withinne the reuer; and the childe saide unto his moder, "A faire lady hathe kepte me from dethe, bicause that ye haue be pitous unto pore children, and norissed the orphelyns for the loue of God and of that ladi that wolde not suffre me to deye, but she hathe saued me." Lo, herein is a faire ensauple how it is profitable to norisshe, with good wille, pore orpelyns and yonge children, and to putte hem to lerning of a science; for it is a charitable dede that plesithe moche God. And also bi this how it is sheued us in ensauple bi the hynde, that whanne the moder of other bestis be slaine, yet wolle she gladly of her gentille nature norisshe the yonge ther as she comithe, and kindithe hem till they may susteine hem self.

## CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

### [Of Rahab of Jericho.]

In Jericho there was a woman called Rahab.

**A**NOTHER ensauple y shalle telle you upon this same nature, how it befelle in the towne of Ierico, there was a woman

that was called Raab, and she was blamed amonge the pepille, but she was charitable. So it befelle that certaine holy men were come into the towne forto teche and preche the pepille, and they fonde the said pepille peruerse, full of malice and cruelnesse, in so moche that they were chased ouer alle, that of necessite they went and hidde hem withinne the hous of Raab, under gret trusses of flexe and hempe, so \* that they of the towne coude not fynde hem, for no serche that thei made. And afterwarde, in the derke night, she aualed hem by a corde from aboue of the tounne walles, in suche wise as they were ascaped and were sauēd, so that God quitethe her, and rewarded her gretly, for that cause; for the tounne was afterwarde take by thayre enemys, bothe men and women, and pershed sauf Araab and her meny, whom God kepte and sauēd, for by cause that she had sauēd and deliuered his seruāntis from thaire enemys. And therfor, as God saithe in the Gospelle, that the good and the seruice whiche is do vnto his ministrees, in his name and for his loue, that he wolde yelde it ayenne an hundred double vnto hem that haue it; wherefor suche good dedes it is noble thinge to be do, and to vse whanne they shalle be yolde ayenne an hundred folde more.

Therof y wol that ye wote the ensauple of seint Anastace, that was putte in preson, but God made her to be deliuered, and lete her wete that it was for because that she susteined and releued pore prisoners with her owne good; for assone as she wost where there was any pore prisonere that was yprisoned for ani necessite of wronge, of enmyte, or be any deseite, she wolde goo releue hem, and yeue hem of her goodes, and helpe hem vnto her deliuerance; and for that cause God guerdoned and quitte her therfor an hundred double. And also the good lorde Ihesu Crist saithe in the Gospelle, that atte the day of iugement he wolle \* haue mercy upon hem that visite and haue pitee upon poure prisoners, sike folke, and poure women that lye in iesyne, for atte the dredfulle day he wolle axe acomptes where as there shalle none sterte to yelde ansuere, wherof y doute that mani shalle be reprised and vndertake in defaute of good ansuere. And therfor, faire doughtres, thinke

Some preachers were cruelly treated, and Rahab hid them,

\* [Fol. 366. col. 2.]

and lowered them from the town walls by a cord.

For this act God preserved her and her family from danger.

God delivered St. Anastasia from prison, because she had been merciful to other prisoners.

Christ promises  
\* [Fol. 37, col. 1.]  
mercy to the merciful.

Queen  
Aragon of  
France visited  
and relieved  
poor prison-  
ers, orphans,  
and sick  
people,

and God  
shewed  
miracles to  
her ;

an example to  
others to use  
charity as  
these ladies  
did.

\* [Fol. 37,  
col. 2.]

therupon, and take ensaample of seint Aragon that was quene of Fraunce, that uisited the poure prisoners, and norissed orpheliens, and releued the sike folkes. And whanne she might not entende hereto, for doute of disobeisaunce vnto the kinge her lorde, priuely she forsoke her lorde, and refused alle worldely ioye and come into Peytiers, into an abbey of ladyes, and putte her selff in habite amonges hem to serue God atte her leyser and plesaunce. And sen hedirto God hathe sheued gret miracles for her ; and how there was a tree in the middes of her cloystre that gaue vmbre and shadow of longe tyme, and was woxe old and drye, but God atte the praier of this holy lady renued the tree in suche wyse as it hadde a nwe barke alle fresshe and grene, and nwe braunches fulle of grene leues, semyng vnto alle creatoures that it was a thing ayenst the course of nature, but only by the might of God, to whom no thing is impossible. And so he hathe wrought for this good lady mani other greet miracles. And therfor here is vnto you good ensaample to be charitable and to use the werkes of charite, as ye haue herde before of two ladyes and of the good Raab, how in what wise almighti God rewarded hem in the ende for \*thaire good seruice.

## CHAPTER LXXXIX.

### [Of Temperance in eating and drinking.]

The parents of  
Samson were  
good people,  
but had no  
child ;

but God told  
the mother by  
an angel that  
she should  
have a son.

I wol telle you another ensaample of the fader and moder of Sampson the fort, whiche were holy folkes and trew in her mariage, but they might haue no child, how it be that they made mani cryengges upon God, with praiera of highe deuocion. And it felle on a day that the good woman went vnto the chirche, atte that tyme called the temple, and so as she made her praiera wepinge, and fulle of lamentacion, God of his goodnesse hadde pite on her, and lete her weten bi an aungel that she shuld haue a childe, the whiche shulde be

the strengest man that euer was, and he shulde enhance the lawes of God bi his strengthe. And whanne this good woman had vnderstonde by the aungelle in what wise she shulde haue a childe, she went forthe in haste to her husbonde, and tolde hym how God of his goodnesse hathe purueyed for her, and that she shulde bere a sone, wherupon her husbonde putte hym in prayer, beseching vnto God that it plesed hym to shewe hym by his aungelle as he hadde shewed vnto his wiff. And thanne God sent vnto hem bothe his aungel, speking vnto hem in this wise, "God comaundithe you bothe to suffre and to do abstinence, and that ye kepe and gouerne youre childe from excesse of drinkinge, and from delicacies of diuerse metes;" for the aungelle saide vnto hem, "excesse and gromandise in etyng and drinkinge werithe ayenst the body and the soule." And whanne the aungelle had said in this wise, he departed from hem, and they fulfilled the \*comaundement of God bi the aungelle, and fasted and dede gret abstinence, & afterwarde thei hadde this childe, that mightly maintained Goddes lawe ayenst the payent, and made mani gret occysiones and dedly batailes upon hem, as God gaue hym strengthe and halpe hym therto, for with his owne hondes he discomfited .iij. M<sup>i</sup> persones. And therfor bi this here is a good ensaumple to do abstinence, and for to faste, for who so wille deuoutly require and beseche God, it mot be by ofte confession with gret repentaunce of misleuyng, and bi fastinge and abstinences, by the whiche we may wyne of almighty God alle that we praie for. And as the aungelle saide vnto the fader & moder of Sampson the fort, that thei shulde kepe thaire childe from ouer moche etyng, but atte the houres resonable, and that more ouer in special ouer moche drinkinge; wherfor that whanne the holy aungel, that knowithe so moche bi the vertu of God, and defended these .ij. vices, thanne it is gode ensaumple to alle men and women how thei shulde eschew and be ware of these and of alle other vices. For by this .ij. vices we entre into the .vij. dedely synnes, as ye shal finde it more plainly. in the boke of youre bretheren, where it spekithe

And she told  
her husband,

to whom also  
God sent by  
his aungel,  
that he should  
bring up the  
child in tem-  
perance.

\* [Pol. 37b.  
col. 1.]

And the son  
became a  
strong man,  
and did battle  
with the  
pagans;

an example  
of the good  
of avoiding  
the two vices  
of over eating  
and drinking.

Gluttony is  
often the  
beginning of  
all other sins.

how ther was an hermite that felle into that synne of glotonie, by the whiche afterwardez he felle into alle the .vij. dedly synnes, for he chesithe the synne of glotonie wenyng that it had be the leste of alle the synnes, wherof y shal telle you how Salamon saithe in a boke that he makithe of an ensauple.

[Fol. 37b.  
col. 2.]

Wine  
weakens the  
senses, spoils  
the features,

and makes  
the hands  
tremble.

Furst, that wyne troubelithe, makithe rede eyen, and feble to the sight, and impetrithe the eres herkeninge, and stoppithe the nostrelles; and it makithe the uisage falce flemed rede, and fulle of white whelkes, and makithe the hondes to tremble and to quake, and waschithe the good blode, and febelithe the synnues and the vaynes; it chaungithe the body, and it hastithe the dethe, and troubelithe the witte and memorie, wherupon, as saithe Salamon, that there may be no good woman nor trewe of her body and she be drunken, for, of alle the goodly condicions that may be in a woman, dronkynnesse is the worste; for whan she is drunke she is disposed to alle manere vnclennesse and vices. Wherfor, faire doughtres, be ware of that foule synne and vice of dronkinnesse, and of other delicious of ouer moche etinge, for onis vpon the day to ete and drinke it is angelik, and .ij. tymes it is the lyff of man and woman, and for to ete ofte tymes after the fleshely appetite, it is the holy lyff of a besta. And alle comithe but of vsaunce and custume; for right as ye custume youre self in youre youthe in etinge and drinkinge, and in alle youre other disposicion, right so ye shalle desire euer more for to continue in youre age. And therfor it behouithe and it is right necessarie, faire doughters, that ye putte remedie euermore contrarie to the fleshely appetite, that vertu and worship gouerne you euer more; as ye may see bi this ensauple of the good aungel that taught and enfor\*med the fader and moder of Sampson the fort. But this aungel spake not in like wise as the aungelle that warned Zacharie, how that his wiff shulde bere a childe and shulde be called Iohan, the whiche shulde neue[r] drinke wyne nor ale. But this childe Sampson was ordeined and enstabelished by the might

Wherefore,  
beware of  
the sin of  
gluttony,

for as you use  
yourself in  
youth so you  
will want to  
do in age.

\* [Fol. 38,  
col. 1.]

Another  
angel told  
Zachariah  
that he should  
have a son,

of God, and bi the swerde to kepe the faithe ayenst the payens and ennemys of God. And seint Iohan was committed and ordeined bi God to preche the faithe, and forto be mirrour and ensauple of chastite, of fastinge, and abstinence, and forto were the hayre, in shewing vnto us oure saluacion and lyff euerlastinge; how be it that y passe ouer in this matere, and y shal telle you an other ensauple.

who was to  
preach the  
faith and life  
everlasting.

## CHAPTER XC.

[How children ought to be sent to school.]

I Shalle telle you an other ensauple of a good woman and a lady that hadde a doughter ynamed Delbora, whiche doughter she putte vnto scole, and by vertu and grace of the holy goste this maide Delbora, so fulle of pacience and of sapience, she loued holi scripture & she was of holy lyff and knewe the secretis of God, and spake of thinges that were to come, in so moche that, for so gret wisdom that was in her, as the pepille was counsailed bi her, & in especialle of thingges that were to comen touchinge vnto the reaume. And she had an husbonde that was dispiteous and cruelle, but she [by] her gret witte and good gouernaunce she coude byhaue her self so welle vnto hym that euer more she plesed hym, and brought hym oute of hys frensyne, and made hym paisible \*vnto her and vnto alle other peple. And bi this good ensauple that yong women, maydenes, shulde be putte vnto scole to lerne vertuous thinges of the scripture, wherethorughe thei may the beter see and knowe thaire sauement, and to duelle and for to eschewe al that is euil in manere, as dede the good lady Delbora. And in the same wise seint Katerine, that by her witte and clergy, with the grace of the holy gost, she surmounted and ouercome the grettest philosophers in Grece, and by her clergie and stedfast faithe she wanne the victory of martirdom. And her body was borne .xij. iurneys longe upon the mount Synay bi the aungeles of heuen, where as

Deborah,  
when a girl,  
went to  
school,

and became a  
propheteas,

and by her  
wit pleased  
her cruel  
husband;

\* [Fol. 38,  
col. 2.]  
an example  
how young  
women should  
be put to  
school.

Also Saint  
Katherine  
overcame the  
great philo-  
sophers,

and her body  
was carried  
by angels after  
martyrdom.



Also a child  
of nine years,  
who had been  
four years at  
school, and  
disputed with  
pagans,

who after-  
wards killed  
him,

\* [Fol. 38b.  
col. 1.]

when a white  
dove flew out  
of his heart.

It is better to  
read examples  
of holy living  
than feigned  
stories and  
fables.

her blessed bodi yeldithe oyle vnto this daye. And yet y  
shalle telle you an ensauple of a childe of .ix. yere, the  
whiche had be .iiij. yere atte the scole, and bi the grace of  
God he disputed the faithe ayenst the payens, and ouercome  
hem alle in errour; so that there was sum of the payens that,  
whanne they aspied hym, thei toke hym and manaced hym  
to stone hym vnto dethe, or ellys forto do hym to deye by  
sum other cruel turment; but, for no thinge that they coude  
do, they might not make the childe forsake his faithe, and  
atte the laste they axed the childe where was his God that  
he leuid inne. And he answered hem, "My God is in heuene,  
and euermore stedfastly withinne my soule, and within myn  
herte;" and hereupon the payens sloughe the childe, and  
for dispite drowe oute his herte forto see yef hys God were  
therin. And whanne \*they had opened his hert, they sawe  
that there flawe oute of it a white doue. And bi that  
miracle mani of hem were conuerted vnto the faithe and  
beleued in God. And therfor this is a good ensauple to  
putte yonge children vnto the scole, and to make hem bokys  
of wisdom and of science, and bokes of vertu and profitable  
ensauples, whereby they may see the sauement of the soule  
and of the body by the ensauples of good leuinge of the  
holy faderes before us, and not forto studie in the bokis that  
speke of loue fables, and of other wordely vanitees. For it is  
beter and more noble thinge to here speke of good ensauples,  
and of vertuous leuinge of seintes, whiche profitethe to oure  
sowles and body, thanne forto studie or to rede of fayned  
stories and fables, suche as may not cause encrease of science,  
and is inprofitable vnto the soule. How be it there be suche  
men that haue opynion that thei wolde not that her wyues  
nor her doughtres shulde knowe no thinge of the scripture;  
as touchinge vnto the holy scripture it is no force, thoughte  
women medille not nor knowe but litelle therof but forto rede,  
eueri woman it is the beter that canne rede and haue knowinge  
of the lawe of God, and forto haue be lerned to haue vertu  
and science to withstonde the perilles of the sowle, and forto

use and excerse. the werkys of thaire sauement, for that is thinge aproued and necessarie to alle women.

## CHAPTER XCI.

## [Of love to stepchildren.]

**A**N other ensauple y shal telle you of a good lady named Ruthe, of whom des\*cended the kinge Daud. Holy scripture praisithe moche the same lady, for she louithe God truly and she honoured hym. And she honoured and obeyed vnto her husbonde as a good woman atte alle tymes, and for the loue of her husbonde she honoured and loued alle his frendes, and bare hem more fauour and priuete thanne vnto her owne frendes; wherupon it befelle that after, whanne her husbonde was dede, his sones that were of another wyff, they wolde haue lefte her no thinge, nor londes, heritage, nor meuble; and she was of a straunge contre, and fer from her frendes. And the woman felle into a gret heuinesse bi the occasion hereof, but the frendes of her husbonde, that loued her for the gret goodnesse and chersinge that thei had founde in her the tyme before in her husbondes, they withstode ayenst the sones of her husbonde. And thei were with her in her helpinge, in so moche that she had al that she aught to haue by right and of custume. And in this wise the good woman saued and wanne her owne, for the frenshipe and good campani that she had ydo vnto the kyn of her husbonde, and vnto his frendes, whiles he was leuinge. And therfor here is a good ensauple how euery good woman owithe to worshippe and to loue kyn and frendes of her husbonde, for ay the more semblaunt of loue that she shewithe vnto hem, the more welthe she shal haue amonges hem. So as it befelle vnto the good lady right that, forto loue and worshippe the kyn and frendes of her husbonde, she \*recovered her iuste partie of the heritage and the goodes of her husbonde in the manere as ye haue herde.

Of Ruth, an  
\* Fol. 38b.  
col. 2.]  
ancestress of  
King David,  
who honoured  
her husband  
and all his  
friends;

and the  
friends helped  
her after her  
husband's  
death;

a good  
example to  
love the  
friends of  
your hus-  
bands.

\* [Fol. 39,  
col. 1.]

## CHAPTER XCII.

[Of women who honour their husbands.]

Abigail had a husband,

NO[w] y wol telle you another ensauple of a good lady that owithe gretly forto be praysid, and she was ynamed Abygal, & she had an husbonde that was of meruailous conuersacion vnto her, and unto his neighebores, and euell spekinge of hem. So it befelle he had do a forfeit vnto the kinge Dauid, wherfor that the kinge wolde destroe hym and putte hym to dethe; but the good woman his wiff that was wise, she went vnto the kinge and clothed her self in louly wise, and with the faire speche that she made she made pees between them; twene the kinge and her husbonde, so that she kepte hym atte that tyme, and at mani other tymes in gret and diuerse daungeres and periles, that he had deserued bi his folyes and his wicked speche. And atte alle tymes this good ladi amended his defautes by her prudence and goodnesse, wherfor that she owithe to be gretly preised. And also for as moche as she suffered paciently the payne and sorw that he made her forto endure. And therfor here is a good ensauple vnto euery good woman how she is beholde to suffre her husbonde; and that she owithe to supporte hym ouer alle and to saue and kepe hym, how be it that he be fole or diuerse, synne God hathe knette hym togedre by bonde of mariage, for in as moche as she hathe gretly to suffre, and she deport her self humbly, and gouerne her goodly vnto her husbonde, and ayenst \*his folye, so moche the more she shalle be beloued of God, and worshipped in the worlde; as y wille shewe by an ensauple of a good lady and wife vnto a senatour of Rome. This senatour was ielous of his wiff, and withoute cause, and he was diuerse, angry, and dispitous vnto her; so it befelle that he had waged bataile ayenst another knight, but he was a cowarde, and failed the day of his bataille, and his champion that shulde haue fought for hym was syke, so that for the day he coude fynde no man that wolde fight for hym. And in this wise he stode upon the point to be disworshipped;

whom the king would put to death;

but she made peace between them;

an example to save and keep your husbands,

\* [Fol. 39, col. 2.]

A good lady, wife of a Roman senator,

fought a battle for her husband, who was a coward,

but the good lady hys wiff considered the gret shame that shulde haue befallē unto her lorde, she went her into a chambre and made her to be armed and mounted vpon a good cursere, and rode into the felde, and hadde her uisage deffait in suche wise that she was vnknowe vnto eueri creatoure.

And for as moche as God sawe the bounte and trouthe of her, and that she dede it in the saluacion and the worship of her lord and husbonde, and for the loue that she had vnto hym, God sent the victorie and the honoure be vnto her husbonde bi her handes, for she conquered his enemy. And whanne the bataile was ydo, the emperesse wold se who was the champion for the senatour, and she was brought forthe and dysarmed before the emperesse, and the emperesse knewe her wellē the wyff of the senatour, and from that day forwarde she & alle the ladies of Rome worshipped \*and helde her in reuerence moche more thanne euer thei hadde ydo before. And she was meruailously worshipped and beloued, as wellē for that she hadde bore her stille simply and debonairly atte alle tymes vnto her husbonde, notwithstanding the displeaunce that he hadde ydo vnto her in worde and dede, for this ielosye and withoute cause. And therfor this is a good ensauple how euery woman shulde lowly suffre of her husbonde; for she that most sufferithe and makithe no countenaunce of her disese, she is worthi to be highly preised, as Salamon saithe, where he spekithe of women in praisinge some and in dispraisinge of other.

and God  
gave her the  
victory,

and thus she  
had great  
honour in  
Rome;

\* [Fol. 39b.  
col. 1.]

a good ex-  
ample to be  
humble to  
husbands.

## CHAPTER XCIII.

### [Of one of King David's wives.]

**A**NOTHER ensauple y wille telle you of one of the wyves of kinge Dauid, how she appeised the wrathe of her lorde. Ye haue herde how that Amon rauissshed and defouled his owne suster of her maydenhode, and how that Absolon her brother venged that same foule dede, and slow Amon; wherfor that Absolon fledde oute of the contre, for that the kyng

One of the  
wives of King  
David,

when he  
would have  
slain Absalon,  
made peace  
for him.

\* [Fol. 39b.  
col. 2.]

And Absalon  
protected her  
after the  
king's death ;

an example  
to love the  
sons of your  
husbands by  
other wives.

his fader wolde haue slayne hym ; but that good lady made his pays vnto the kinge, for she shewed so mani good resounes vnto the kinge her husbonde, that he forgaue Absolon alle his wrathe. And she was not his owne moder, but wiff vnto his fader, but she kept and helde in loue her lorde and his children as a good lady, and as ought to do eueri good woman. For a woman may not wel shewe gretter loue vnto her husbonde, thanne forto loue his \*children of another wyff, in that she conquerithe double worshippe to susteine hem as moche as her owne ; for atte the laste ende she shalle finde thereby good and worshippe, as it befelle vnto this same ladi, for, whan the kinge was dede, there wer suche as wolde haue do her wronge, but the kinges sone wolde not suffre it, and saide opiny before the pepille, "Allethough she were not his owne moder, she shewed hym gret loue and kindenesse, and bare hym worshippe, and vnto alle the kinges children that were comen of her body, wherfor she shal not lese her right." And therfor bi this is a good ensaunple how that eueri woman shulde loue and worship her husbonde, and alle tho that be come of hym, as the children that he hathe hadde bi his other wiffes, and suche as be of his nexst kinrede, for gladly there is none welded but hit deserued atte sum tyme, as ye haue herde how it befelle vnto this goodly lady.

## CHAPTER XCIV.

[Of the evil of flatterers.]

Queen Sheba  
came from  
the East to  
see King  
Solomon,

and to have  
his counsel.

\* [Fol. 40,  
col. 1.]

NOW y wolle telle you another ensaunple of the quene Saba ; and she was a wise lady and a good woman, and she came from the parties orientys vnto Ierusalem to be counsaile bi the wise Salamon, and she lost nother pas nor her trauaile. Wherfor, bi this good ensaunple that eueri good body owithe to chese a good man and a prudent to be counsaile by, and forto holde the pepille in loue and concorde. For where as there be riottis and debatys and striff, the wisdom of gode counsaile of a prudent man withdraw\*ithe and amoderithe suche thinges, and sette

hem in pees, and bringithe hem vnto good ende; and who so werkithe by good counsaile, leuithe in prosperite and shalle ende worshipfully; as it befelle vnto this noble lady, the quene of Saba, that come from fer contre to seke counsaile of the wise Salamon kinge of Ierusalem.

And yet y wolde that ye knewe an ensauple of an emperour in Rome. This saide emperoure on a tyme befel sike and shulde deye, but alle his lordes and the senatoures, forto plesse the emperour, they saide vnto hym that he shulde be alle hole in hasti tyme after that he had slepte and swette; but he had no frende aboute hym that counsailed hym for the helthe of his soule. So he had a chamberleyn with hym that he had norissed from his childehode, and had serued the emperoure truly euermore. This chamberleyn sawe wel that his lorde might not ascape that dethe, and that alle the lordes counsailed hym vnto his plesaunce. The chamberleyn come vnto his lorde, & axsed hym, "Sir! how fele ye youre self, and in youre hert?" And the emperour saide vnto hym, "Y fele my self right feble and sike." And thanne his chamberlein beganne to saie vnto hym in right discrete and goodly wise, "Syre! God hathe yeue you in this worlde gret honoures, riches, and alle worldly welthe and ioie; wherfor, thanke God therfor, and haue youre mynde vpon hym for his goodnesse, and of the worldely goodes that he hathe sent you, departe hem amonges \*the poure pepille, and to suche as haue nede therto, and dispose youre self in suche wise as there be founde no reproche in you before God." And the emperoure herkened wel vnto that he counsailed hym, and saide vnto hym in this wise, "Beter is the frende that prikithe thanne the flatour that oyntethe." And this he saide bicause of the lordes spake no thinge vnto hym but for the helthe of his body, for to plesse hym, and to flater hym; and his chamberleyn spake vnto hym sharpely and truly, for the helthe of his soule and for his saluacion. For who so louithe the body, shulde loue the soule; for who so louithe his frende, he shulde not flater hym nor eschewe to counsaile hym truly in alle that longithe vnto his

An Emperor of Rome was ill, and about to die, but his courtiers said he would get well again;

but a chamberlain

told him the truth.

\* [Fol. 40, col. 2.]

"Better is the friend who pricketh than the flatterer who anointeth."

True friends  
will speak  
the truth,

as did this  
chamberlain.

worshippe and profite, and euermore to telle hym his sothed & trouthe withoute flaterie, or ellys he is not his good frende; and not forto plaie with placebo, as the lordes dede with the emperoure, notwithestondinge thei wost wel he was in that point that he might not escape the dethe, and wolde not counsaile hym the profit of his soule as dede his trewe poure servaunt, the chaumberlein, vnto his lorde that putte hym in the way of his sauement. And so the emperoure trowed his counsaile, and departed his goodes, and gaue it largely for the loue of God.

## CHAPTER XCV.

[Of the prophet Elisha.]

A good  
woman had  
a simple  
husband;

\* [Fol. 40b.  
col. 1.]

and the pro-  
phet Elisha  
came to live  
in their house,

and prayed  
for them that  
they might  
have a child;

and, after-  
wards, when  
the child died,

I Shalle telle you another ensaample of a right good woman that hadde a symple man vnto her husbonde; and thei were good folke and loued welle togedre, and the woman was ryght \*charitable and loued the seruauntes of God. And so there was an holy profyt in the contrei fast by Ierusalem that hight Elezeus, and this good [?wo]man had gret deuocion vnto this holy man, and required and praied hym forto come to herburghe and loged in her hous, and her husbonde and she made a chaumbre solitaire for this holy man, where as he might vse his deuociones and serue God. But this woman might haue no child nor lygne bi her husbonde. This holy profit auised it, and praied for hem bothe vnto God, in suche wise that atte the laste she conseiued and had a faire childe, whiche leued vnto the age of .xv. yere, and thanne the childe deyed in the same chaumbre where as the holy man was herborued and loged before. And this good woman went and sought ouer alle in the contre, til she had founde ayen this holy profete, and bi her prayer brought him ayen vnto her hous, and into the chaumbre, where she sheued hym her childe that was dede, and saide in this wise, "A! holy man, lo here the childe that God gaue me thorughe thi deuoute priere, whiche was alle my ioye and sustenaunce, y beseche the that

thou wylt prairie God to sende me my childe ayen, or ellys that he wille take me vnto hym also, for y wolde [not] leue after the dethe of my childe." And this holy profit Eliseus had pitee and compassion vpon this holy woman, and praied deuoutly vnto God, wherethorughe the childe had his lyff ayen, and leued longe after that, and was \*an holy man. Wherfor, my good doughters, ye may vnderstonde bi this how it is good and profitable to be aqueinted with holy men of good lyff and of good conuersacion, as had this gode woman that had a childe bi the praier of the holy prophete. And after the childe was dede, ayen bi the praier of the said holy man the child resuscited, and releued ayen from dethe to lyff, and for certaine God is this day as mighti and as debonayre as he was euer here before vnto hem that deserue it. Wherfor putte youre diligence with humble and devoute hert to serue God, and holde the companie of good folke of good leuing and of charitable werkes, and truste hem that counsaile you to vertu and worship; for alle goodnesse comithe therby, as it befelle vnto this good woman, as ye haue herde before.

he prayed to  
God for his  
life to be  
restored;

\* [Fol. 406.  
col. 2.]

an example  
how good it is  
to know men  
of holy life,

who will give  
you good  
counsel.

## CHAPTER XCVI.

## [Of meekness in women.]

**A**NOTHER ensauple y wille telle you of a good woman that hight Sarra. Ye haue welle herde how she had .vij. husbondes, the whiche were mischeued and slayne bi the annemy of helle, bicause thei were vntrue in thaire mariage; and how her chaumbrere reproued her how that alle her husbondes mischeued and deied from her. And this good woman sawe her chaumbrere wolde haue chidde and striued with her, as a fole as she was, this good woman right wisly and humbly she saide vnto her, "Faire loue! nother to the ne to me it apertenithe not to speke of the iugementis of God;" and more she saide not vnto her. She sembled not vnto the doughter of a senatour of Rome, that \*had so cruelle hert

A woman had  
seven hus-  
bands, who  
all died for  
wickedness,

and she was  
blamed  
therefor;

but she bore  
it meekly.

\* [Fol. 41,  
col. 1.]



The daughter  
of a Roman  
senator strove  
and chid with  
everybody,  
whereby she  
lost her  
marriage.

Another  
woman was  
quarreling  
with a man,

and would not  
be counselled  
to peace,

till the man  
spoke evil  
of her,

and defamed  
her before all.

\* [Fol. 41,  
col. 2.]

Curs growl  
and bark, but  
greyhounds  
do not so.

An emperor

found his  
daughters  
chiding, and  
said,

that she straue & chidde in the plaine strete wit her neyghe-  
boures, wherfor she had suche renounse that she was hadde  
oute of her good helthe of body, as for frentyk and not of good  
mynde, for whiche cause she loste her mariage. And, therfor,  
it is gret foly to euery woman to chide, or ellys to ansuere  
vnto hem that be of suche vngoodly condicions, fulle of noyse  
and striff and cruel and wilfulle hasty, wherof y shalle telle  
you an ensauple that y sawe by a gentille woman testi and  
hasti, wherfor y saide vnto her, "Madamoiselle! y prairie you  
that ye ansuere not vnto this fole, that is of suche condicion  
rather to speke euell than wele." But she wolde not do bi my  
counsaille, but chidde with hym, and answered worse thanne  
she hadde ydo before, sayeng vnto the man that he was  
not worthe. And he answered her that he was beter worthe  
a man thanne she for a woman. And somoche the wordes  
and the noyse encresed betwene hem bothe, tille atte the  
laste the man saide vnto her, he knewe suche one that had her  
atte his comaundement bothe day [and] night, whanne that  
he wolde, so that there was moche foule speche betuene hem,  
and before moche pepille, and the woman defamed for her  
hautyuete and her foly and chidinge. And, therfor, her shame  
and disclaunder was shewed opinly there before the peple, that  
hadde no knowinge therof before. She was not lyke vnto the  
wise Sarra, that made no gret ansueres vnto her chambrere; for  
ofte tymes by vnauised speche of r[i]ght is made the wronge.  
And it is a myschaunt thinge for any gen\*tille woman, other  
to striue or to chide in ani manere, as y shalle shewe you  
ensauple bi the properte of sum bestis, as ye may see bi  
these curre doggis; of thaire nature thei growne and berke  
euermore, but gentille greyhoundes do not so. And so aught  
it to be of gentille men and gentille women.

And also y shalle telle you an ensauple of an emperoure  
that was ferce and right cruel, but he wolde neuer more  
chide with no creatoure. And it befelle on a tyme that he  
fonde his .ij. doughtres chidinge, wherfor that he wolde haue  
bete hem, ne hadde it be that other went betwene. And

thanne he saide vnto his doughtres, "Oute of a gentille herte shulde neuer come velenye word no dede, for by chidyng is knowe the gentil from the vilanie, that spekithe it with his mouthe." And, therfor, it is gret gentillesse and nobilnesse to be pacient and humble, and not to chide, nor to striue in speche with suche as be not wise. And for certaine it befallithe often tymes that a worde folylly saide or folily ansuered engenderithe suche thinge as after causithe disworshippe and shame. And therfor, faire doughtres, here is ensauple how often tymes ye shalle finde as foles that be of haultarie corage, whanne there is holde noyse or riotte ayenst hem, they wille ansuere and speke velanie thingez of thaire malice suche as was neuer do ne thought, but forto auenge hem in her gret yre. And as welle euery woman aught to be ware in ansueringe her husbonde before pepille, for mani causes, as forto holde her pees and be \*stille, she shalle haue worshippe and be holde wise of alle that know and see her. And yef she ansuere vnto his displeaunce, there shalle come vnto her harme and disworshippe, as it is saide before.

"Vile words should not come out of gentle heart."

An example how foles will say false things for vengeance,

and how wise women are humble and meek.

\* [Fol. 41b. col. 1.]

## CHAPTER XCVII.

[Of Queen Esther.]

I Shalle telle you another ensauple of quene Ester, that was a good woman and a noble lady and right wise, and she loued & dredde the kinge her husbonde aboue alle thinge; and holy scripture holdithe her in gret recomendacion for her goodnesse, but the kinge her husbonde was daungerous, and of diuerse condicion with her, and full of vngoodly speche; but for no thinge she wolde neuer ansuere hym that might be to his displeaunce. But mani tymes whanne she sawe hym bi hym self, and that he was oute of his yre, withe her faire and humble speche she coude so wel behaue her self vnto hym in goodly wise, that she shewed hym alle his faute; and therfor the king loued her merueilously, and saide within

Queen Esther is praised in Scripture,

that she neuer displeased her husband,

though she showed him his faults.

The one good  
in a woman is  
to be of little  
speech.

\* [Fol. 41b.  
col. 2.]

When she  
was asked  
why she did  
not play and  
disport  
herself,  
she said, "I  
must be in  
peace with my  
husband,"

and that three  
things were  
better than  
pleasure,  
sport, and  
play; and  
these were  
love of her  
husband,  
dread of his  
displeasure,  
and shame of  
evil reproach.

hym selff that he might neuer be wrothe with his wiff, she was euermore so plesaunt and so welle auised in her speche, and in alle thing, for it is onethe good thinge that may be in a woman to be in a litelle speche, and not to ansuere vnto her husbonde in wrathe, for a gentille hert is euermore dredfulle other to do or to saye ani thinge that might displese vnto hym whanne she owithe to loue worshippe and drede. Wherof the tale is reported in the boke of Kinges of this good ladi that had so merueillous a kinge and lorde vnto her hus\*bonde, but she her selff was euer humble and good. And upon a tyme her gentille woman saide vnto her, "By asmoche as ye be faire and yonge, whi wille ye not plaie and disporte you otherwhiles?" And she answered hym ayen, "For y must meintayne and gouerne my selff in suche wise as ye know best that it plesithe vnto my lorde, myn husbonde, and as his wille that y gouerne, forto haue his loue in pees with hym euermore." And in this manere the good ladi saide vnto her damoysselle and gentille woman. Wherfor, my faire doughtres, y prairie you to haue these ensaumples in youre herte, and in youre remembraunce, and ansuerithe not with none anoyeus wordes of ungoodly speche vnto youre husbondes, nor striue not with youre langage with no creatoure, but euermore be gracious, humble, and curteys, as was this good lady the quene Hester, as ye haue herde. And, as she that saide vnto her damoysselle, her herte was in the loue of her lorde and husbonde, wherby that she dede hym euermore plesaunce and lyued with hym in ioye and pees. And after that she saide vnto her woman, that thre thinges distrained her for to eschewe diuerse plesaunce, disportes, and other ioyeuseie, and tho were loue, drede, and shame; and these .iiij. thinges maistred her; the loue that she had vnto her lorde her husbonde kepte her, that neuer she wolde do thinge that was his displeaunce; drede, that kepte her from synne and disworshipe; shame, to be auised and saued from velanie reproche.

## CHAPTER XCVIII.

[Of Susannah the wife of Joachim.]

**A**NOTHER ensauple y shalle telle you of Susanne, that was the wiff of Iochim, that was a gret lorde in Babiloyne. This Susanne was a faire lady, and of holy lyff, and it befelle that there were .ij. prestis of the lawe priuely hidde in a gardein, where as this lady bathed her, and these .ij. prestis come sodenly vpon her vnaused. And thei behelde the gret beauute that was in her, and they desired to fulfelle thaire fleshshely delite and concupissent of thaire body with her, in so moche that the two false prestis saide unto this good lady, that, yef she wolde not consente to fulfelle thaire fleshshely plesaunce, they wolde bere witnessse ayenst her that thei had founde her with a yonge man with whom she hadde ydo fornicacion and luxurie and enfraynt her mariage, for the whiche she shulde be bete with stones vnto the dethe, or ellys her body shulde be brent, as the vsaunce of the lawe was atte that tyme. Wherof this good lady was gretly abasshed, and in grete feere and doute that by the false witnessse of these prestis she sawe her dethe but yef she wolde consent vnto thaire foule delite; for .ij. witnesses were atte that tyme trusted and bileued, and moste of hem that were the prestis of the lawe. And hereupon she auised in her thought and herte that she had leuer to dye the worldely and bodely dethe thanne for to putte her soule in auenture and to do synne, and to do upon the dethe euerlastinge, and refused the falce prestis, and putte her selff in the wille and in the disposicion of almighti God, in whom \*was her hope and beleue. And she ansuered and saide vnto the prestis that they were falce, and she wolde not consent vnto hem, but she hadd leuer to deye worldely dethe by falce accusacion thanne forto deye in the sight of God rightfully by cause of synne in brekinge his lawe and the sacrement of mariage. And thanne these .ij. prestes and iuges accused and witnessed ayenst this lady Susanne, how

[Fol. 42,  
col. 1.]  
Susannah was  
the wife of a  
great lord,

and two  
priests de-  
sired to lie  
with her,

and threat-  
ened other-  
wise to accuse  
her falsely.

But she  
thought it  
better to lose  
her body than  
her soul,

\* [Fol. 42,  
col. 2.]  
and would  
not consent.

Then they  
accused her  
of adultery  
with another,

they hadde founde her with another man thanne her husbonde in the synne of aduoultre, wherfor that she was incontenent iuged vnto the dethe. But she cried with highē voys vnto God, and with deuoute praier, as he that knewe the trouthe in kepinge her mariage, he wolde vouchesauf entende to her deliuerance.

And almighti God, that foryetithe noght his seruaunt, sent sodenly Daniel, whiche with gret voys cried and saide, "O ye iuges of Israel, iuge not vnto dethe the woman whiche as inconuenient and falsely acused of synne and blame, but her accusatourez be enquired eche by hem selff in what wise they fonde her;" wherof alle the peple was ameruailed to here and se a childe speke in suche wise, and wost wel that it was by opin miracle of God, and so they were departed, and eche of hem examined by hem selff. And the furst saide that he had founde hem vnder a figge tree, and the seconnde saide he hadde founde hem vnder a plumme tre pruner. And for the defaute was in hem, they were bothe founde fals of that they had saide, and they were iuged vnto the dethe. And, whanne they \*sawe that there was none other remedye but that thei shulde deye, they were beknowe of thaire fals accusinge of this good ladi, and that thei had wel deseruid the dethe. And therfor here is a good ensauple how God kepithe and sauithe hem that louithe and seruithe hym truly, and putte al thaire disposicion in his honde and grace. And this good lady, that hadde ben to chese the worldely dethe than forsuerē the lawe of God and to be fals in her mariage vnto her husbond, doutinge the dethe euerlastinge of her sowle more thanne ani worldely thinge, wherfor God of his goodnesse kepte and saued her sowle, body, and worshippē, as ye haue herde. And therfor euery good lady and euery good woman aught euermore to haue her faithe & hope in God and in his lawe, nor for worldely ioie, ne payne, nor drede of dethe, to consent to synne, nor to breke the sacrement of her mariage, as by this good lady Susanne ye haue herd faire and good ensauple. Wherfor, faire doughtres, y prairie you that ye withholde this ensauple in youre herte euermore.

but Daniel  
was sent by  
God to help  
her,

and he ques-  
tioned each  
accuser by  
himself,

and so proved  
their  
falsehood.

\* [Fol. 42b.  
col. 1.]

An example  
how God  
keepeth those  
who serve  
him.

Wherefore  
every good  
lady should  
have faith and  
hope in God,

as Susannah  
did.

## CHAPTER XCIX.

[Of Elizabeth, the mother of St. John.]

**I** Shalle telle you another ensauple of seint Elizabeth, that was moder vnto seint Iohn. She serued furst God and after her husbonde, and loued and dradde hym. And yef there hadde ani thinge befallē withinne hys hous that shulde haue turned her vnto his displesaunce, she wolde amende it or kepe it secrete vnto the tyme that it were amended, in suche wise that her husbonde fonde neuer occasion of disple<sup>s</sup>saunce; for she was so good, so welles auised, and of so noble attemperance, that she kepte her husbonde in ioye and pees, and oute of wrathe. And so aught euery good woman to do in the same wyse as this holy woman, that louithe and dredithe God, and bare faithe and honoure vnto her husbond. And, therfor, God sent her to bere a childe the good seint Iohn the baptist, in that she was wel guerdoned, for a woman that louithe God and kepithe her clene oute of synne, God rewardithe her in this worldely lyff, an hundred sithe more after the departinge oute of this world, as God gaue vnto this goodly lady bothe worldely prosperite and heuenly ioye euerlastinge. And so he guerdonithe and rewardithe alle suche as louithe hym and kepe truly thaire mariage, and haue thaire faithe and beleue in hym; as these good ladies Elizabeth and Susanne, in the manere as ye haue herde.

Elizabeth,  
the mother of  
Saint John,  
served first  
God and then  
her husband,

\* [Fol. 42b.  
col. 2.]

and so kept  
her house in  
joy and  
peace;

so God re-  
warded her  
by sending  
her a son.

## CHAPTER C.

[Of Mary Magdalene.]

**A**NOTHER ensauple y shalle telle you of the Magdalene that purged and clensed her self from synne by the teres of her eyen, wepinge whanne she wysshe the fete of oure lorde Ihesu Crist, and wyped hem with the tresses of her hede. She bewaked and wepte for her synnes, that was the loue of God and the drede that she had for her misleuinge. And in suche wise we aught to wepe and to haue gret sorughe for our synnes, with gret shame that euer we dede so moche vilesse and vncleennesse, and with gret repentaunce and gret humilite come to confessiō,

Mary Mag-  
dalene be-  
wailed and  
wept for her  
sins,

as we ought  
to do for  
ours,

and to confesse  
them to the  
priest;

\* [Fol. 43,  
col. 1.]

for shame  
and repent-  
ance availleth  
with God.

Mary Mag-  
dalene is also  
praised for  
the love she  
had for  
Christ,

who had re-  
stored her  
brother to  
life.

\* [Fol. 43,  
col. 2.]

After she had  
lived in  
abstinence  
for twenty  
years, God  
sent her  
heavenly  
food.

A good ex-  
ample of  
the good of  
penitence.

and to confesse, and shewe, and telle it oute vnto the preest truly \* and faithfully, in the same manere and the condicion and moyan day and tyme, as the synne hathe be do, withoute any excusacion for drede of God, and the hardynesse that man or woman hathe with the shame of his misdede and synne, & for to confesse it truly vnto the preest. That shame with forthenkinge of synne auailithe moche vnto the mercy of God, bothe in remission of his synne, and vnto the allegeaunce of payne; for God, that seithe the humilite & knowithe the repentaunce in euery herte vnto hem that be so sorufulle and repentaunt of her misdede, he his stered vnto myse and eslargithe his pitee vpon hem, and of his grace yeuithe hem pardone and foryeuenesse; as he was mercifulle vnto this blessed and holy Magdalene, whanne he forgaue her synne for the contricion and repentaunce that she hadde. Another reason there is wherfor the blessed Magdalene aught to be gretly praised, that was for the gret loue that was so feruent vnto oure lorde Ihesu Crist, that she loued hym aboue ani thinge that euer was or might be. And for the gret faithe that she hadde in hym, for the miracles that he wrought whanne he resuscited the Laser, her owne brother, from dethe vnto lyff, whiche tolde her afterwarde what payne it is to deye, and what paynes it ys to suffre after this lyff for hem that be synfulle and haue leued in synne in this worlde. For the whiche cause the holy Magdalene was neuer ioyfulle, but euer sorufulle of the dethe and of the gret peyne after the departinge oute of this worlde, in so moche that she putte her \* lyff in the desert, and lyued in gret abstinence the space of .xx. wynter. And whanne she had so longe continued, doinge gret penitence, that as by course of nature she might no longer endure, God of his mercy visited her, & sent her the heuenly fode & angelyk sustenaunce with the whiche she was refeccioned and sustened vnto her lyues ende. And therfor this is a good ensauple how good and how profitable it is to be sorufulle for synne, and ofte tymes to be confessed, & to do penaunce, almesdede, and praiser, and to drede God, the dethe, and the payne that is to come after this lyff for oure mysdede, as ye may see by ensauple of

this good holy Magdalene, that so-moche loued and dredde God, and wepte for her synnes, and with the teres of her eyen wysshe his fete; and afterwarde she leued in desert longe tyme in gret penitaunce; and atte the laste how God had pitee upon her, and by the aungelle sent vnto her heuenly sustenance. And in the same wise he wylle do vnto alle other good men and women that wille be sorufulle for her synne, and loue and drede God, and do penitaunce in fastinge and abstinence, and for euer more to refuse and forsakinge synne, as did this good Marie Magdalene.

God will reward all who repent, and love and dread him.

## CHAPTER CL.

## [How women should care for their husbands.]

**A**NOTHER ensauple y shalle telle you of .ij. women, that were the wyues of .ij. men that were oute of the beleue and faith of almighti God. Notwithstanding that her husbondes were wicked, the women were good, and ministred and serued God truly; so by this is good en\*sauple that euery good woman, how so it be that her husbonde were of wycked condicion, the woman shulde not therfor eschewe to be good, nor to take ensauple atte his wickednesse, but moche the rather to be pacient and deuoute, and to contenu euer in praiers to purchase grace the rather of God for her husbonde. For the goodnesse of the woman makithe lessithe the wickednesse of the man, and aswagithe the wrathe of God, and encreasithe hem bothe in good and in worships; for the good dede of the woman supportithe the euel dede of the husbonde, as it is contened in the boke of lyff of the old faderes, where he spekithe of a wicked man that .iiij. tymes he was saued from velayne dethe bi the praier of his good wyff, and whanne it befelle that she deyed and her husbonde had no more the praiers of his goode wyff vnto God for hym, the kynge of the contre made hym forto deye upon euelle dethe for his wicked lyff of the tyme passed. And therefor it is necessarie vnto a man that is of wicked lyff to haue a woman of good lyuinge, for in as moche as a woman felithe her husbonde

Two heathen men had Christian wives.

\* [Fol. 436. col. 1.]

The goodness of the woman lesseneth the man's wickedness.

A wicked man was saved three times by his wife's prayers,

so that a wicked man should have a good wife.



If there be  
not goodnesse  
to save the  
wickednesse,  
it is lost.

\* [Fol. 43b.  
col. 2.]  
Yet no  
woman  
should serve  
her husband  
before God.

of euell conscience and of other euell lyff, so moche the more she is bounde to be good, and do abstinence, and forto praie for hym; for and the goodnesse of that one supporte not the wickednesse of that other, that is to saie, the goodnesse the wickednesse, alle shulde perisse and falle into perdition. And yet y saie you that obeysaunce vnto God, and the drede of God, is before mariage; for we owe furste to obeye vnto oure creatoure that hathe \*made us vnto his semblaunce and ymage. For the lawe commaundithe furst obeye vnto God; for no woman aught not to serue her husbonde before God, of whom to serue comithe the profit of the soule that is euerlastinge. For as the scripture saithe that alle the good seruice of the body is the saluacion vnto the soule, for the welthe of the soule hathe be no parail, and therfor the wyf is bounde furst to obeye and to serue God, and after vnto her husbonde, by the faithe of mariage, and to praye for hym benignely and patiently, to counsaile hym for the welthe of his soule, and so to deturne hym from eueri euell dede, in as moche as is in her powere; for therto is bounde euery good woman.

## CHAPTER CII.

### [Of Martha the sister of Mary.]

Martha, the  
sister of Mary  
Magdalene,  
was charit-  
able, and  
Christ to  
reward her  
would lodge  
in her house.

**A**NOTHER ensauple of Marthe the suster of Marie Magdalene. This good lady was customer to herburgh the holy profites and the seruauntes of God that preched and taught his lawe, and she was fulle of almesse dedes unto the nedy and poure folkes; and for her good and holy lyuinge, oure lorde Ihesu wolde be loged in her house with her. And this was she that saide vnto oure lorde Ihesu Crist that her suster the Magdalene wolde not helpe her to aparaile the labour of the hous; but oure Lorde answered her goodly, that Marie had chose the beter seruice, for she satte at his fete and herde his doctrine, and wepte, and made sorw for her synne, and cried hym mercy with humble herte. As the good lorde saide trouthe, there is no seruice that God louithe so moche as to crye hym mercy,

and to be \*repentaunt of misleuinge, and to forsake alle synne ; for seint Marthe dede her seruice to herburghe and to logge oure lorde Ihesu, and forto aparaille mete and drinke for hym and his disciples, with goode deuocion and trewe entent of her hert. For God dede mani miracles for the loue of her, and come to comfort her in her deyng, and receyued her soule unto his ioye euerlastinge ; and in this wise she was rewarded of God for her true loue and seruice. So that bi this euery woman may toke good ensauple how it is good to herberughe the seruautz of God, and suche as be prechinge and techinge the lawe of God and the faythe, and for to herburghe pilgrimes and other people, and to refresshe hem that be needfulle to receiue almesse ; & God hym selff witnessithe in the Gospelle, that saithe atte the ferefulle day of his gret iugement he wol axe of hem that shalle ansuere byfor hym, how and in what wise they haue receiued and uisited the pore in his name, whanne as they shalle yeue accompte of thaire habundance of the worldly goodes that they haue had, and not gouerned hem vnto the plesaunce of God in good werkes of charitee, as they were lerned bi the comaundement of God to do. And therfor it is a noble, vertu to do almesdedes and to herburghe the seruantes of God, and to recomforte and uisite alle suche as by iugement and pore, and in aduersite of prison, or in any other infirmite, for there befallithe euermore good auenture vnto hem that do soo. And God rewardithe hem a thousande partiez aboue alle that they canne or may do ; \*wherfor he saithe in the Gospelle, that who that receiuithe ani of his seruautis in his name, receiuithe hym selff, for they be his messengers & shew his trouthe and vertu.

\* [Fol. 44, col. 1.]

Martha  
harboured  
and lodged  
Christ and  
his disciples,

for which she  
was re-  
warded ;

an example  
to teach us to  
help the  
servants of  
God.

For it is a  
noble virtue  
to give alms  
and visit the  
poor.

\* [Fol. 44, col. 2.]

### CHAPTER CIII.

[Of women who were full of pity.]

**A**NOTHER ensauple there is of the good ladies that wepte for oure Lorde whan he bare the crosse upon his shuldres,

Good ladies  
of holy life  
wept when  
Jesus carried  
his crosse,

whereupon he vouchedsauf to suffre dethe for the redempcion of us synners. These good ladyes were of holy lyff, and had  
and he spoke to them, her hertis pitous, and God turned towardes hem and said vnto hem, "My doughters! wepithe not for me, but wepe for the sorues that be to come;" and shewed hem the mischeef that is befallē sin hedirwarde, as ye shal finde it in the boke that y haue made for youre bretheren. These good ladyes, that had pitee upon the soru that oure Lorde suffered, thei loste  
to reward them. not the teres that they wepte for hym, for he rewarded hem hyly: and therfor by this ye may haue ensauple, how euery good woman aught to haue pitee upon the dise of the pore pepille and seruantes of God. As he saithe hym self in the Gospelle that, "Who that hathe pitee upon the pore in the reuerance and for the loue of me, y wol haue pitee and mercy upon hem." And as the wise man saithe, "The woman of nature shulde be pitous moche more thanne the man, for the man is of more of harde corage than the woman." And, therfor, it is saide, a woman that is not humble and pitous she is mannisshe and not womanly, whiche is a uice in womanhode to be rude or of hautigne courage. \*And also the wise man  
\* [Fol. 44b. col. 1.] saithe, a woman shulde not be a chiche of that she hathe in gret plente, that is to saye, of wepinge teris, and of piteous herte, to haue pitee on the pore peple, vpon her kyn and frendes, that she seithe in necessitee. And there was a gode lady that was countesse of Aniou, and founded the abbey of Burgeyl, and she is there yberied, and it is saide she is there in flesshe and blode, seminge in coloure though she were quicke lyvinge. This good lady she halpe and gaue her goodes  
A countesse of Aniou vnto her pore kyn, vnto pore gentille women and maydenes, to susteine and maintaine her estate, to kepe from synne and misleuinge. And she enquired thorough euery parisshe for pore men and women that were wedded and had children, and had not wherewith to susteyne hem, and for suche and for diuerse sikenesses or other aduersitees might not laboure ne trauaile, and upon poure women in gesyne, alle suche pepille, and mani other, she releued and comforted with almesse  
gave to her poor kyn,  
and to poor men and women,

of her charitable deuocion. And also she hadde her medicines and surgens forto hele and medicine alle suche as were needfulle, wherthorough that for her bounte and goodnesse, God hath shewed mani miracles for her ; for as it hath be saide, whanne she shulde receiue her matenis, he saulter or other bokes of deuocion they were brought vnto her oute of the ayre as by miracle. And, therfor, bi this a good woman may haue gret ensauple how and what it is good forto be pitous upon \*the poure pepille, and to be charitable. So as atte this tyme y passe ouer to speke more of these good ladyes, and retorne ayen to other thingges, whiche y shal shewe vnto you in other manere.

and had  
surgeons for  
the sick.

God re-  
warded her,  
for when she  
would say her  
prayers, the  
books came  
to her out of  
the air.

\* [Fol. 44b.  
col. 2.]

## CHAPTER CIV.

## [Of charity and forgiveness.]

**M**I faire doughtres, be ware and kepe you welles euermore that ye be not ouercome with the synne of yre or wraethe; for God saithe in the Gospelle that we shulde foryeue alle oure mysdedes, and to be fulle of pacience and humylite, for who so desirith vengeaunce desirith contrarie vnto the lyff of the soule. For who so takith vengeaunce upon his malefactours he lesith the merite of humble sufferaunce & pacience, whereupon oure Lorde saithe that "rather make pees with thi neyghboure, and be in charite togedre, thanne thou come with discorde to make thine oblacion before myn auuter." For furst be in charite with alle creatoures, and thanne suerly make thine offeringe and praier; for God receyuithe not the praier nor oblacion of man nor woman that is in the synne of yre and wrethe. For God, that made the pater-noster, saithe in the praysing the fader of heuene in ensauple to alle creatoures how they shulde foryeue, *Et dimitte nobis debita nostra*, that is to saye, God foryeue vs as we foryeue, and as we desire to haue mercy and foryeuenesse of God, right so we must forgeue alle oure mysdoers, euermore to be in charite. And who so saithe or praieth his pater-noster in other wise, he is not in parfite charitee, \*and

Beware of  
wrath, and  
forgive with  
patience and  
humility.

Be in charity  
with all be-  
fore offering  
prayers to  
God,

\* [Fol. 45,  
col. 1.]

otherwise our  
prayers are  
not accept-  
able to him.

An example  
of a burgesse,  
whom all  
thought  
charitable,

until, when  
dying, she  
refused to  
forgive one  
who had  
offended her.

Then the  
priest by the  
example of  
our Lord,

and of a  
knight's son  
who forgave  
his father's  
murderers,  
\* [Fol. 45,  
col. 2.]

tried to per-  
suade her to  
be in charity,

thanne his praiers are litelle or not acceptable. Whereup[on] y shalle telle you an ensauple of a burioyse, a riche woman, as y haue herde it preched, whiche as by seming was a charitable woman and fulle of ensaumples of good leuyng; till it befelle that she toke siknesse and shulde deye, and the person of the chirche, that was a perfit holy man, and a good preest, and come forto shriue her, and herde her confession. And whanne she shulde shriue her of the synne of yre, the preest laide vnto her that she shulde be in uerray charite, and foryeue alle tho that had trespaced or offended her, in the same wise forto axe foryeuenesse of alle them that she had do vnto ani offence. And as unto that article, she answered her confessour, that a woman that was her neighbour had do vnto her so gret offence that she might neuer foryeue her with good herte. But this good man, bi faire ensaumples, and with faire speche, saide vnto her in that wise, oure lord Ihesu Xpc forgaue paciently his dethe, and also he saide vnto her another ensauple of a knightis sone, in what wise, bi the counsaile of an holi heremyte, vnto whom he was shriue, he foryaue hem that had murdred and slayne his fader, bi the counsaile of the holy hermite, whanne he shewed hym in what wise that almighti Ihesu oure saueoure forgaue and perdoned hem that crucified hym vpon the crosse, with mani other devoute and good ensaumples that he had saide vnto the knightis sone, wherfor he forgaue the dethe of his fader at the reuerence of God, in so moche that upon a tyme as he \* kneled before the crosse saieng his praiers and deuocions, the crosse with the ymage bowed vnto hym, and [he] herde a voys that saide to hym in this wise, "For as moche as thou haste foryeue the dethe of thi fader vnto hem that axed the mercy and grace, in the reuerence of me and of my passion, right so y foryeue the alle thine offences and synnes, and thou shalt haue my grace euermore, and in the ende of thi lyff thou shalt duelle with me in the ioie of heuene euerlasting." & in this manere this good holy preest counsailed this woman to foryeue the woman her neyghebour, but for no amonestement nor counsaile that her gostely fader coude do nor saye, she

wolde not pardone, she was so fulle of yre, by encomberaunce of the deuelle, but she deyde in this foule dedly synne of wrathe and yre. So that in the same night this holy man dremed that hym semed by auision how the deuelle bare away the soule of this buriours, and that he sawe a gret foule tode sittynge vpon her herte; and upon the morw whanne the day is come it was tolde vnto hym that she was dede; wherfor that her kyn and frendes were alle sembled forto bery her, and sent for this preest to do her seruice forto bringe her body vnto the chirche, as it is the vsaunce; but he answered hem that she shulde not be beried nother in the chirche, nother in none other holy place where as the custum bodyes were beried, for she deyde in dedly synne of wrethe and yre, and wolde not foryeue another woman that was her neygheboure of certaine \*displesaunce that she had vnto her, for the whiche cause that she deied in dedly synne she was dampned, & more ouer he saide vnto hem that there shulde be founde within her body, upon her herte, a foule tode. And for this cause her frendes were displeased with the person, and saide it was not so, it was but a fa[n]tesi; but her frendes at the laste opened her dede body, and fonde it trewe that the preest had saide vnto hem, where they founde a foule orible tode within her body, that grapped her herte with her pawes, wherof they were hougely ameruailed. And thanne this holy man this persone coniuered this foule tode, wherfor that he was there in that place, and what he dede. And this tode answered and saide, that he was a deuelle of helle, that by the space of twenty wynter he had tempted that woman vnto many synnes, but in special vnto that whereinne he fonde most auauntage, and that was in the synne of yre, or of wrathe, "for syn that tyme she had so gret wrathe vnto her neygheboure that she wolde neuer foryeue it, for y putte so grete hate that she might neuer beholde her with her sight but she were oute of charite. And that other day whan thou herdest her confession, y was vpon her herte, and grapped it so sore with my .iiij. pawes, and helde it so streite and enpoysoned, that she might haue no wille to yeue foryeuenesse. And yet atte one tyme y had gret fere

but she would not, and died in anger.

The priest dreamed that the devil bare away her soul,

and therefore he would not have her buried in the church.

\* [Fol. 45b. col. 1.]

And, when they opened her body, a toad was found holding her heart.

The toad said he was a devil, who had tempted her for twenty years,

and prevented her from yielding to the persuasions of the priest.

\*[Fol. 45b.  
col. 2.]

An example  
how all  
should be at  
peace and  
charity.

that thow hast not take her away from me, and conuerted her with thine longe preching and \*good ensaumple, but as now y haue the uictorie in suche wise as she is myne, and shal be dampned in helle for euermore." And alle the peple that were aboute and herde this thinge, thei were aferde and hougely ameruailed, and durst no more speke to burye her within holy place, but the body was ordeyned for as longithe therto. So this is good ensaumple how euery creatoure owithe to be in loue and charitee, and to be mercifulle vnto hem that axe mercy, and to foryeue with good herte, and who that wille not foryeue may not be foryeue of God, and thanne might falle in suche perille as ye haue herde of this woman the burgoise.

## CHAPTER CV.

That people  
should hasten  
to receive  
visitors.

Off hem that shulde come in the same estate as they be, and shew hem selff in such wise, whanne thaire frendes and cosynes come forto uisite hem and to see hem, wherof y shalle telle you an ensaumple.

A knight  
came home  
from a long  
voyage,

and brought  
two gowns for  
his nieces,

but one kept  
him waiting  
while she  
dressed  
herself,

\*[Fol. 46,  
col. 1.]

THER was a knight, a noble man, that had ben oute in straunge uiage byyende the gret see; and he hadde .ij. fayre neces, the whiche he had norished, and afterwarde he married hem and loued hem meruaylously. And, in the comyng homwarde from his viages, he bought for eche of hem a gowne of the best and goodlyest shappe and deuise as atte that tyme, and welle & richely furred. And it happed he come late vnto the manoyre and place of one of his neces, and cried and called for her, and sent vnto her that she shulde come and see hym. And she \*went streite vnto her chaumbre, forto array her in the most fresshe wise, and sent hym worde that she wolde come to hym in haste, and so the knight abode and sawe his nece come not, and sent ayen vnto her, and she ansuered and praied he wolde not thenke it longe, for she wolde come vnto hym anone. So the knight abode so longe vnto the tyme he disdeyned therof that his nece taried so longe and come not vnto

hym, by as moche as he hadde by longe tyme be in straunge contre, and that she had not see hym a gret while before, and toke his horse, and rode his waye, and went forto see his other nece. And as faste as she herde the uoys of hym, she knewe it was her vncler that hadde be so longe oute of the contre; notwithstandinge this woman a litelle before, for her playser and disporte, toke upon her to make leuein for brede of whete, and with her hondes as thei were, pasted with the leuein that she handeled, al floury, in the estate as she was, she comithe forth with gret ioye and embraced hym plesauntly betwene her armes, and saide vnto hym, "My dere lord and vncler, ye be right wolcome, in the same estate as y herde youre uoys y am come to you for the gladnesse that y haue of youre presence and of youre comynge as this tyme, but that y am come in so symple awyse before you, plesse you to foryeue it me." And the knight rewarded vnto the womanhode and manere of his nece, and within her self he praised her gretly, and he loued her moche the more thanne euer before. And he gaue her the .ij. gownes \* that he had ordeined and bought for her and her suster; and so she that come ioyfully in the state that she was in before her vncler, she wanne two gownes, and she that taried to arraye her self so queintly, she loste the grace and loue of her vncler. And, therfor, she that come before her vncler in suche arraie as she was inne, and afterwarde she went into her chaumbre and abeled her self in the best manere, and sin saide vnto her vncler, "Y haue aparailed my self in this wise to do you the more honestly seruice," she wanne the loue and the grace of her vncler. Wherfor, by this ensauple, how a woman may with her worshippe come to receyue her kyn or perfit founde in suche arraye and habilement as she is inne for the tyme. And there was a boronesse that was a good lady, and she wolde not but seldom vse her fresshe arraie, neither in the atyre of her hede nor for her body, wherfor her seruantes women saide vnto her, "Madame, for what cause plesse it you not to holde your self beter beseyn in youre vesture?" and she answered her and saide, "And y were euery day in my good

so he went  
away, and  
went to the  
other niece,

who hastened  
to meet him.

So he gave  
her both  
gowns.

\* [Fol. 46,  
col. 2.]

A baronesse  
would not  
often wear  
her fine  
clothes,



which she  
kept for great  
occasions.

array, and richely clothed, how moche and wherof shulde y be amended the day of the highe fest, or whanne y most repaire vnto the presence of my princesse and of other ladies ; for the vsaunce of the freushenesse and of goodly array requirith the tyme and place, for euery day lyke to othe is thinge comune, it is selden praised."

## CHAPTER CVI.

[Of a maid who was saved by a knight.]

\* [Fol. 46b,  
col. 1.]

A false  
knight,

for revenge,

gave a  
poisoned  
apple to a  
maid, for the  
lord's son,  
and charged  
her with the  
murder.

But God sent  
a knight to  
fight for her,

\* [Fol. 46b,  
col. 2.]

I Shalle telle you an ensauple of a knight that \*faught and dede bataile for the loue of a faire maide. Ther was duellinge, in the contre of a gret lorde, a falce knight that required and praied a fayre yonge mayde of loue for his foule delite, and she wolde not consent to his desire for no thinge of behest, or in ani other wise, but that she kepte her self in clenness of virginite. And in despite hereof, the knight thought in hym self that he wolde do her disworshipe and displesaunce, and by treson he enpoisoned an aple and gaue it vnto this mayde to bere it vnto the lordes sone. And this yonge woman bare it forthe vnto this childe, by the whiche he was enpoisoned, and thanne this untrue knight accused her, and saide that she hadde take and receyued gret rewarde of the lordes enemys to enpoison his childe, so that this yonge mayden was dispoiled vnto her smocke, and ordeined forto [be] brent in the fyre, and she wepte and made gret lamentacion vnto God, beseching hym to be her comfort, and she was not gylty, and that it was the false knight of whom she hadde resseiued the aple to bere it vnto the childe. But the knight denied it, and there was none forto offende this mayde, nor that durst fight for her in that quarelle ayenst the knight, he was renommed so worthi a man in armes. But almighti God, that helpithe euery rightfull true cause, had pitee vpon this mayde, that was innocent of the dethe of the lordes childe, and as by auenture of the grace of God there come a worthi knight ycalled Patrydes in the defence of the mayden, as she shulde be putte into the \*fire. The knight behelde her wepinge and

makinge so gret sorw he hadde pitee vpon her, and enquired of her the cause of her disese, and she tolde hym from point to point of euery thing the trouthe as it was, wherof the most party of the peple bare her recorde & witnesse. And thanne the noble knight, that was pitous and had compassion upon this mayden, gaged bataile ayenst the false knight, and there was a sore bataile betwene hem bothe, but the discomfitture befelle upon the fals knight, and was mischeued for his falsnesse, and upon the point of his dethe he knowlaged alle the treson that he had wrought ayenst this yonge mayde. But yt happed so that the good knight was hurte in .v. parties of his body with .v. dedly woundes, wherthorughe that he must nedely deye. And whanne he was disarmed, he sent his sherte, that was pershed in .v. places and alle blody, vnto the mayden for whom he hadde do his bataile. And she resseiued it, and keppe hit alle her lyue, and praied for hym contynuelly, for the gret goodnesse and kinde-nesse that he shewed vnto her to suffre dethe for her deliuerance, and for to respite her dethe and aquite her of alle shame and alle falce accusacion of treson, and ouercome her ennemie, and made her free for euermore. Right so oure lorde Ihesu Crist faught for us, for the gret compassion and pitee that he hadde upon alle humaigne lynage, whanne he deliuered us from the derkenesse of helle and dampnacion perpetuel, where as faught for us by the vertu of his glorious passion, whanne he \*suffred for us his .v. woundes vpon the crosse, and bought us with his precious blode, and receiued dethe for oure redempcion and deliuerance, and fraunchised us of alle thraldome, and restored us ayen vnto his ioye and blisse euermore lastinge; and thorughe hys mercy, debonairete, and vertu, and for loue and pitee that he hadde vnto alle his creatoures. And in this ensauple eueri man and woman aught to haue pitee and sorw of the disese of thaire frendes neighbours, and vpon the poure creatoures of God, right so as the knight had pite upon the mayde, and to wepe pitously as wepte the good ladyes after oure lorde Ihesu Crist, whanne he bare the crosse to be crucified and suffre dethe for oure synnes.

and in the  
duel he de-  
feated the  
false knight,

but was him-  
self wounded  
to death.

So Ihesu  
Christ our  
Lord faught  
and died for  
us;

\* [Fol. 47.  
col. 1.]

an example  
how all  
should haue  
pity on others

## CHAPTER CVII.

## [Of charity to the dead.]

The three  
Maries came  
early to  
anoint our  
Lord's body,

and found he  
had risen  
again.

\* [Fol. 47.  
col. 2.]

When Nero  
martyred the  
Christians,  
good ladies  
buried their  
bodies,

but now a-  
days 'charity  
is right thinly  
sown.'

**A**NOTHER ensauple there is of the .iiij. Maries, whiche cam  
erly in the morw vpon Pasque, forto anynt the body of  
oure lorde Ihesu Crist, for thei had made precious oynement  
of gret coste, and they had deuocion to serue God euermore  
as thei that were brennyng in the loue of his seruice. And  
there thei fonde the angelle that saide unto hem how oure  
lorde Ihesu Crist was resuscited, wherof thei hadde gret ioie;  
and for that gret gladnesse, thei went and tolde vnto the apo-  
steles of his resurreccion. This good ladyes wached longe tyme  
forto make this precious oynement, and thei arose before the  
sonne risinge, supposinge to haue anointe the precious bodi  
of oure lorde before his resurreccion, that thei shulde haue  
do her seruice. Wherfor here is a good ensauple hou that  
eueri good woman that is wedded, or of religion, aught to  
be \* curious, and diligent, and waking in the seruice of God,  
thei that may do it, for thei shalle be guerdoned an hundred  
sithes double; as were these .iiij. holy ladyes whiche God loued and  
enhaunced. It is redde in the cronicles of Rome, that whanne  
the emperoure Nero and other tirauntes of the lawe martired  
the holy seintes, as it is contened in thaire legendis, that the  
good ladies of Rome toke the bodies that were dede, and  
beried hem priuely, and dede hem gret worships, and also thei  
arose erly and serued God with good deuocion. And al were  
it so that in that tyme there were mani tyrauntes, neuertheles  
there were mani good women and charitable and blessed ladies  
fulle of pitee, bothe in Rome and in many other places, where  
as y trowe now atte this day the charitee and holy seruice of  
women is right thinne ysowen; for there be mani that haue  
more thaire herte vpon the worlde, and forto obeye vnto the  
worldely plesaunce, than to the honoure and seruice of God. For  
thei dispose hem self more to make hem self fresshe arraied,  
forto be loued vpon of sum yonge louers, thanne for any other  
entent. But and suche women dede thaire payne to come and

here the seruice of God, and forto saie deuoutly thaire praiers, as thei haue thaire thoughts ellys where, and as they putte thaire diligence to make hem selff gay, goodly behauing in fresshenesse, vnto the worlde, and also to eschewe alle manere of speche, or forto herkyn the iangelyng of foly plesaunce, whiles thei ben in holy place, and in the chirche, it were the beste for alle suche women; for yef thei wolde not refuse and putte \* awaye suche vsaunce, thei displese gretly God, and they shalle be punisshed withoute mesure for thaire synne.

\* [Fol. 47b.  
col. 1.]

## CHAPTER CVIII.

[Of the example of the five wise virgins.]

**T**Hereupon it is also saide, now a dayes, or these faire yonge ladies mow arise, or they haue kemed her hede, and iurred or auised hem selff in a mirrour, and atyred hem selff with thaire riche & fresshe atyre, the procession is past, and alle the masses and seruice is songe & doo; whereof as by ensaumple God spekithe in the Gospelle of suche women, of .v. maydenes that were purueyed by thaire good prudence of oyle, light, and lompes, and were diligent to wasshe, and, whanne the spouse was ycome by night, they entreted withe hym into the ioye and gladnesse of his duellyng place, and saide the thatis be redy opin vnto hem. But there were other .v. that were imprudent, that slepte and were not purueyed, nother of lyght, oyle, nor lampe; and whanne they come and wolde haue entred into the place, they fonde the gatis shette and closed ayenst hem, and the lorde the espouse saide vnto hem, whanne thei wolde haue entred, that he knew hem not, for they were come to late. So that, like vnto this ensaumple, y doute there be mani suche women as be slouthfulle and slepe whanne thei shulde wake in the seruice of God, and shoulde be purueyed of alle such thingges as longithe vnto the saluation of thaire soules, that is in good werkis and holy praiers, and forto haue grace of God. And y doute me that they tarie and haste hem not of thaire amende-ment, in truste of longe lyff vnto her ende, of \* the whiche ende

Young ladies now so often take so long to dress that they are too late for service;

to whom, as an example, God spoke of the five wise virgins, and the five foolish ones.

Many put off their amendment in trust of long life,  
\* [Fol. 47b.  
col. 2.]

but, like the  
foolish vir-  
gins, they may  
come too late.

How dear  
then will seem  
the vanities of  
the world!

But the good  
women will  
go to bliss  
eternal, like  
the wise  
virgins.

\*[Fol. 48,  
col. 1.]  
Who loveth  
God keepeth  
himself clean.

of thaire lyff they haue no suertee, nor know the day nor the  
houre. Y suppose thei shalle finde the gate shette of thaire  
sauacion, & shalle be saide unto hem as was saide vnto the .v.  
maidenes that were folys, that slepte and were vnpurueyed, the  
espouse knowithe hem not, and than it shal be to late the  
repenting, for there is none recoueraunce of tyme. And they  
shal be shamfulle whanne they see hem self departed from God  
and his holy seintes, and forto be ledde vnto the waye of helle,  
with the horrible companye of the fendes, where as is cruel  
payne and sorw continuel that neuer shal haue ende. Alas!  
how dere it shalle be solde the queintise, the plesaunt folyes,  
and the foule delytis, that haue be used for fleshely delectacion  
and worldely plesaunce; right so and by that waye shulle passe  
the women that haue leued sinfully, and the good women vnto  
the blisse euerlastinge, for thei shalle goo with thaire espowse, that  
is to saie with God her creature. And they shalle fynde the gret  
gate wyde opin vnto hem, forto entre into the gret ioye, bi as moche  
as they were diligent and wakinge with the light of her lampes, of  
the espowse, that is to saye that they had do holy werkes, and  
were redi purueyed, by clenness of good, abyding the houre of  
the dethe, to departe oute of this worlde ioyefulle, and were not  
encombered nor heui to slepe in synne; but euermore they helde  
hem self clene and oute of synne, and they were ofte tymes shriue  
and kepte hem self oute of dedely synne, and loued and dredde  
God aboue \* alle thinge. For who that louithe God, he kepithe  
hym self clene and hatithe synne. For synne is displesaunce vnto  
God, and departithe the creatoures from the lyff euerlastinge, as ye  
haue herde here by ensauple bi the worde of God in the Gospelle.

## CHAPTER CIX.

### [Of the Virgin Mary.]

Of the lady  
that hath no  
parallel, the  
mother of the  
Saviour,

**N**OW y shalle after this speke vnto you of a lady that hathe  
no paraile, that is she the right glorious mayden Marie  
and moder of the Saueoure of the worlde. And this is so

highe an ensauple, that it may not be discreued, the whiche the hignesse, the beaute that her sone Ihesu hathe enhaunced her above alle the heuenly thingges, as the renouuyn of hym her sone that is God and man, right so the renouuyn of this heuenly quene, moder and maide, is euerlastinge, whiche as for her gret humilite she dred her sone more than euer dede moder, for she knew wel from whennis he come, and what he was, and therfor she was the chaumbre and the temple of God, where as was made the espoisalle, and the alyauunce, and knyntyng of the godhede vnto the manhode, diuinite vnto humanite. Bi this glorious mayde is come the lyff and the saluacion of mankynde. God wolde that she were espoused and wedded vnto the holy man Ioseph, that was an olde rightfulle man; for God wolde be borne withinne the bonde of holy mariage, in fullyng and forto obeye vnto the lawe, and forto eschewe the suspesion of the worldely speche. And also that the blessed mayde shulde haue compani to plesse her forto kepe her and for \* to gouerne her and to lede her into Egipte. And it befelle that whanne Ioseph aperceiued that she was gret with childe, he wold haue forsake her, and saide he knew wel that the childe was not his, but that same night the fader of heuene almighti sent vnto Ioseph his aungel visibly, that saide vnto Ioseph that he shulde no thinge doute nor be abasshed, for she had conceiued a childe by the vertu of the holy gost, the whiche shulde be redempcion and saluacion of alle the world. And thanne this olde Ioseph had gret ioye, and peyned hym self to do her worshippe and seruice, for he knewe wel that by the profitees as they had profesyed that the sone of God shulde be incarnat of mayde that hight Marie, and visibly shulde be sayne man here in erthe; whereof Ioseph thanked God humbly of his grace and reuelacion, that it liked vnto his goodnesse to make hym so worthi to see here with his eyen and to be seruaunt vnto her that was the clene mayde and moder vnto God and man. And in the same wise the holy mayden honoured and was obeissaunt vnto her husbonde Ioseph, wherein the scripture praisithe her highly, and for as moche

whose renown  
is euerlasting,

who called  
herself the  
temple of  
God.

God wedded  
her to Ioseph,  
an old good  
man,

that she  
should haue  
a guide and  
protector:  
\* [Fol. 48,  
col. 2.]

and told  
Ioseph that  
she was with  
child by the  
Holy Ghost.

And Ioseph  
was joyful,

and thanked  
God.

But Mary  
was obedient  
to her hus-  
band;

also as the aungelle fonde her solytarie in the temple, in deuocion & praier euermore contynuelly, whiche is ensaunple to euery good lady that is yonge, and to euery good woman to be deuoute in the praier, and in the seruice of God, and to loue clenness, & to be humble and charitable. Also, the scripture praisithe her hily, this blessed mayden, by as moche as she was sumdel \* abaissed and doutet whanne the aungelle salued her; and whanne she demaunded how in what wise she might conceiue a childe that neuer had companie ne flesshely knowinge of man; and the aungelle assured her, and saide that she shulde haue no drede, nor be ameruailed therof, for she shulde be fulfelled with the holy goste, and that there was no thinge impossible unto God, that is to saie God may werke and do alle thinge unto hys plesaunce. And in the same wise, her cosyne Elizabeth had conceyued childe, that .vi. monthes had be bareyn and passed age forto bere childe. And whanne the aungelle had assured her in this wise, she answered and saide vnto the aungelle, "Lo! here the chaumbrere of almighti God, so be it do unto me upon thi worde as thou hast saide." This blessed lady Marie she wolde furst wete how it might be, but Eue, oure furst moder, wrought not in that wise, for she trowed to lyghtly whanne the serpent made her to breke the comaundement of God in Paradys, whanne she bote upon the appille, whereby she was deceyued, as mani other symple women be now a dayes, that trowen lightly flateringe of foles, wherby they fal into synne and vnto vncleennesse, for they enqueren not, nor take no reward nor doute not, the last ende of suche thinges ar thei consent to doo, that is to saie worships for welle doinge, or shame and punissyon for synne. Wherfor the glorious mayden Marie, by as moche as of her vertuous prudence she doutet whanne she resseied the annunciation bi the aungelle, till she \* knewe hym for the messenger of God, axinge how it might be that a mayde shulde conseiue and bere a childe; wherby is gret ensaunple vnto you alle women, that whanne there is saide or reported ani thinge vnto you, that neither ye ansuere ne consent till ye be assured what may

an example to  
every young  
lady and every  
good woman.

\* [Fol. 48b.  
col. 1.]  
Mary asked  
how she might  
have a child,  
that knew no  
man;

but likewise  
her cousin  
Elizabeth had  
conceived in  
her old age,

and Mary  
asked how  
it might be,

doubting, in  
her prudence,  
till she knew  
the message  
was from God.  
\* [Fol. 48b.  
col. 2.]

befalle vnto you in the ende, worship or blame, as by this glorious mayde Marie ye haue ensauple.

## CHAPTER CX.

[Of the Virgin Mary as an example of humility.]

Also, alle holy scripture praisithe this noble ladi of gret humilite that was in her, whanne the aungelle saide vnto her that she shulde be moder vnto the kinge and sonne of God, of whom the kingdom and reigne shulde be endlesly; notwithstandinge alle this she humbled and obeied her self, saiong she was an humble chambrere and servaunt vnto God, withoute ani presumpcion, but desiringe the wille and plesaunce of almighti God to be fulfilled in her euermore, whiche plesed highly vnto the fader almighty, the gret lowlinesse of this blessed mayde, and for that humilite she was chose the most worthi of alle creatoures, and so plesaunt vnto the diuinite, that, within her pure uirginalite of her flesshe, blode, and bone, the Sone of God toke humanite; wherthorughe here is good ensauple vnto alle women to loue this vertu of humilite, that is to saie, to be humble vnto God and vnto the worlde, and for a wedded woman to be obedient and humble vnto her husbonde. For as the scripture saithe, who that makithe hym selff lytelle by waye of humilite, he shal be moch and enhaunced by grace of God \*vnto worships. And for certayne God and the aungelle prairie and loue more humilite thanne ani other vertu; for it destroyethe pride, whiche is the synne most displeasunt vnto God, as it sheuith that for the same synne the aungelle felle oute of heuene. And therfor euery woman shulde be humble & curteys, and thenke upon the glorious maide Marie, as for the most good ensauple vnto alle women.

Also, the scripture praisithe this good lady for her curtesye & good nature, whanne she went forto uisite her cosyn saint Elizabeth, and the childe that was withinne her, whiche was saint Iohan the baptist, reioyed by the grace of the holy

Holy Scripture praiseth Mary for her humility,

as desiring only the will and plesaunce of God;

an example to all good women of humility,

\* [Fol. 40, col. 1.]

which destroyeth pride, the sin most displeasing to God.

Also Scripture praiseth her courtesye and good nature, as shown in visiting Elizabeth;



gost. And seint Elizabeth, saieng vnto oure lady that she was blessed aboue alle women, for the fruit that was within her, and that it was not reson the moder of the Sone of God shulde come to uisite so pore as she was. And in this wise fulle goodly thei reuerenced and obeyed eche to other, as louyng cosynes and parentys. As by ensauple hereof ye may see how ye aught to loue, uisite, and reuerence youre kyn, and eche vnto other, in the manere as ye haue herde of these .ij. good ladies, & not forto saie that as there be sum amonges women that of that gret pride they sayn, "Y am the gretter gentille woman, and of the more noble lynage, and gretter maistresse, wher she shal come rather vnto me;" or ellys thei be enyeusis whiche shalle goo furst up on the offerande, forto haue most of the vayne glorie of the worlde, So that there be mani women that haue thay\*re hertys suolle fulle of pride and enuye, as atte diuerse assemblies and festis thei auyse to be the furst yset and serued, and haue the honoure, or ellis for despite they wille not ete nor drinke, for the gret enuie that is within hem. Wherfor ye may see that suche women thenke litelle upon the humilite and curtesye that was betwene these two ladyes, Marie and Elizabeth. Wherfor wete it welle, that suche creatoures, so fulle of vein glorie and enuye, thei shalle be sore punisshed for thaire synne, and litelle sette by in the sight of God; and as saithe the good lady, quene Ester, that, "ay the more that a woman is of gret birthe and noble lynage, she shulde be the more humble and curteysa," for by the vertu of humilite the pore is enhaunced and the riche is yworshipped. For the pore semithe hym self in grete worshipec, whanne he is cherisshed of the riche; and the riche is gretly honoured whanne he is beloued of the pore; as unto the riche forto haue good renouun, and forto be beloued, and forto uisite thaire pore lynage, and to susteyne hem in honoure, as ye may take ensauple of the quene of heuene, that uisited and worshipped her cosyne seint Elizabeth, that was a good blessed woman.

an example  
how we ought  
to love and  
visit our  
kindred.

\* [Fol. 49,  
col. 2.]  
For many be  
full of envy  
and pride,

who think  
little on the  
humility of  
these two  
ladies.

By humility  
the poor is  
enhanced and  
the rich  
worshipped.

## CHAPTER CXI.

[Of the Virgin Mary as an example of pity  
and of suffering.]

**A**lso, the scripture praisithe highly this holy mayden Marie,  
in as moche as she went vnto Galilee vnto a mariage,  
where as the wyne failed atte the feest, and this good lady  
had pitee therof, and she required her sone Ihesu, as by manere  
of complayninge, by as \*moche as the wine was failed, and  
the benigne lorde Ihesu Crist, knowinge the entent and desire  
of his moder, turned the water into wyne, for he had pitee  
upon that he sawe his moder pitouse; and, therfor, bi this  
good ensauple how that a woman aught to haue pitee upon  
her parentys, kyn, and frendes, and upon the pore peple, and  
helpe and socour hem in alle that she may, for it is gret  
charitee and fraunchise naturelle. And after this the glorious  
maiden went after her sone, whanne he was goo from her  
forto dispute & preche ayenst the Iues and the maistres of  
the lawe, and she wost not where he was bycome. And she  
fonde hym whanne she had sought hym longe tyme, and saide  
unto hym in this wise, "My faire sone, youre parens and frendes  
& y haue had gret fere and doute forto go and seche you."  
And he ansuered his moder, that suche as were his parens  
and frendes, tho were they that fulfilled the comaundementis  
and the wille of his fader in heuene. Wherof the Iues and  
the wise men were highly ameruailed of his gret prudence  
and science that was of so yonge age. After this sorw, that  
she went to haue loste her sone, she hadde another, for  
whan she offered hym in the temple vnto the holy Symeon,  
that gretly had desired forto see hym, and euer praied vnto  
God that he shulde not deye vnto the tyme that he might  
see with his eyen the sone of God, the helthe and redemptoure  
of mankinde, thanne by the grace the holy gost he sawe and  
knewe hym verraly, and thanne he tha[n]ked God, and saide  
with high voys, "Lo! he're the clere light, and the sauement  
of the worlde." And also Symeon saide vnto the moder of

Also Mary is  
praised for  
her pity,

\* [Fol. 49b.  
col. 1.]  
in asking her  
son to turn  
water into  
wine.

Mary lost her  
son once,  
when he dis-  
puted with  
the Jews;

also she  
offered him  
in the Temple,

when holy  
Simeon  
thanked God  
that he saw  
\* [Fol. 49b.  
col. 2.]  
the world's  
Saviour,

and prophe-  
sied great  
sorrow to  
Mary;

an example to  
others to bear  
sorrow  
patiently.

Ihesu that she shulde see the tyme whanne the swerde of sorw shulde perisshe thorughe her herte, that is to saye, that she shulde see hym suffre his holy passion from the beginnyng vnto the ende, for the whiche vnnethe there was ani defence betwene his passion and her sorughe, sauving the dethe for oure redempcion. And, therfor, by this is good ensauple vnto alle ladies and good women, that whan the quene of heuene and lady of the worlde had so gret sorw in this worlde, that none other creatoure aught not to be ameruailed to suffer displeaunce and vnese, whanne so high a lady suffered and endured so gret sorw and tribulacion. And therefore we aught wel to suffre and forto haue pacience; and we that be continually in synne and fulle of vnclennesse, and for that oure iniquite and synfulle desertis deserue euermore punission, we aught not by reson to be spared to endure and suffre tribulacion and sorw for oure deseruinge, where as the sone of God spared not his owne blessed moder to suffre her to be sorufulle that neuer offended.

## CHAPTER CXII.

## [Of other examples of charity.]

Of Saints  
Elizabeth,  
Cecilia, and  
other charit-  
able ladies.

\* [Fol. 50,  
col. 1.]

and of a lady  
of Rome, who  
seeing a poor  
woman at  
masse took her  
home to  
clothe her,

AND that alle ladyes and women shulde be pitous and charitable, as by ensauple of the holy lady that distributed and gaue for the loue of God the gret partie of the good that she had, and in ensauple of her in the same wise as seint Elizabeth, seint Luce, seint Cecile, and mani other ladyes that were charitables, they gauen the most parte of thayre good vnto pore peple that were \*in necessite and mischeef, as it is expressed and shewed in thaire legende; as y shalle shew you bi the ensauple of a good ladi of Rome. As she was atte her masse, she loked behinde her, and she aspid a pore [wo]man that trembeled for colde in a gret froste and colde wynter; wherof this good ladi had grete pitee, and cleped the pore woman vnto her, and lefte the masse and led her home vnto his hous, and priuely this lady gaue her a gowne well furred and other clothinge as was nedefulle vnto her; wherof ther felle gret

miracle, for the preest that was atte messe might neuer speke worde vnto the tyme that the ladi was come ayen. And as sone as she was come, the preest had his speche and his voys, and saw in ausion the cause, that for the pitee that oure ladi hadde upon the pore naked woman that she went forto clothe, that the preest shulde abide of in his masse vnto her cominge ayen, for the loue of the gret charite and pitee that she had upon the pore woman. For God receiued before his aungelle that almesdedede in gret praisinge, for the goodnesse & humilite of the lady. Whereby here is a good ensauple vnto ladies, & vnto alle women, in what wise they shulde be charitable and fulle of almesdedes vnto alle creatoures, as fer forthe as they haue powere ; for almesdedede plesithe moche vnto almighti God, for it comithe of fre nature, and of good loue vnto God and to alle creatoures that be in necessitee.

and the priest  
could not  
speak till her  
return ;

an example  
that God is  
much pleased  
with charity.

## CHAPTER CXIII.

## [Of examples of good living and chastity.]

NOW here before y haue spoke of the glorious maide Ma\*rie, vnto whom there may be no comparison, and there shalle now be sheued you of the good ladyes that were vnaraied, duellynge in Rome, the bifore tyme they had be maried, and how after that they leued chastely, clenly, and holyly in thaire manere, and wered crounes in token of clenness and chastite, but it shulde be longe tyme to reherse and speke of hem alle before tyme and comynge of oure lorde Ihesu Crist, and it hathe be founde in the Bible. And after y telle you of sum good ladyes that haue be syn the nwe testament, that is to sein sen God was borne of the holy mayden Marie, and, as the scripture praisithe the good ladies of that tyme, it is resone that we praisen sum ladies of the tyme whiche that we be, and of suche as in oure knowinge, as y shalle saie of euery astate an ensauple or twey, forto shewe ensauple vnto other for the goodnesse and worshippe of hem that be now in oure dayes shulde not be hidde nor withdrawe, but they shulde be praised and putte in memorie and regestred perpetuelly, as well as

\* [Fol. 50,  
col. 2.]  
Of Roman  
ladies who  
lived 'chastely  
and cleanly,'

for as Scrip-  
ture praiseth  
good ladies of  
old times, so  
should we  
those who  
live now.

Of Princess  
Joan, late  
Queen of  
France,

\* [Fol. 50b.  
col. 1.]

and many  
other noble  
ladies,

who lived  
good lives,  
and should  
be praised.

they that were here before, withoute ani disdayne. And furst y shewe you of the noble princesse Johanne, now late quene of Fraunce, for she was a woman charitable and of good lyff, fulle of deuocion and of almesdedes, and she kepte her astate so noble, and of so good ordenaunce, that it were gret thinge to recorde from point to point and in alle wises. After y putte the duchesse et *cetera*, that hathe had moche to suffre, and euermore she \*hathe kepte her self in holy lyuinge, whiche were longe thyng to reherce and telle of her goodnesse and vertuous condicion. And also it is not to ~~forgete~~ the countesse moder vnto the erle et *cetera*, how that nobly she gouerned her self and used holy lyff. Also, of a baronesse that was of this contree, faire and yonge, the age of .xxv. wynters, whanne her lorde deide, the whiche was gretly required and desired of mani lordes and knightis, but for the loue that she had vnto her lorde her husbonde, and vnto the children, she wolde neuer after be wedded, but lyued in gret perfeccion, wherof that she is highly forto be praised. And this good ladi was the baronesse Dartus.

#### CHAPTERS CXIV, CXV.

##### [Examples of wives who have honoured and attended their husbands.]

Of a noble  
and fair wife,

who had an  
'ungoodly'  
husband,  
whom she  
loved and  
honoured.

Also, y shalle telle you of a lady that was a knightez wif, how it befelle vnto her sin the tyme and iourney of Crecy, the whiche is .xxvj. wynter agone. This lady was faire and yonge and right gretly desired, but for no thinge she wolde not be wedded, but she loued and norissed her children worshipfully and goodly; wherof that she had gret praisinge of the worlde. And yet she was moche more preised in tyme of her husbonde, for her husbonde was ungoodly, and right unlykly to haue so faire a lady; for she was a gentille woman and of worthi lynage, more thanne was her husbonde, and neuertheless she worshipped and loued her husbonde as moche as thow he had be the most goodly man of the royalme, and she dred hym and serued hym humbly, wherof the peple praised her merueylously.

And for \* this cause this lady owithe welle forto be putte in remembraunce amonge other ladyes that were good, for there was neuer no reproche founde in her womanhode. And now y shalle telle you of another good ladie, the wiff of a knight, and she was faire and yonge and of noble lynage, and her husbonde was right auncien, and turned ayen unto childehode for age; and for siknesse and febilnesse he made the issues of his purgacions oueral and in his bedde as a yonge childe; but this good lady was euermore entendaunt aboute hym, and serued hym in as humble wise as thou she had be a chambrere. And vnnethe there might haue be founde a woman but atte sum tyme she wolde haue lothed her, or ellys to haue be right scoymous ta haue do the seruice as thes good lady serued her husbonde contynuely. And atte diuerse tymes she was sent for to come vnto the daunces atte the festes amonge other ladyes, but right selden she wolde not come thereatte, nor no thinge might withholde her but that she was euermore redy atte the houre that she wost to do her lord seruice. And as ofte tymes it was sayde vnto her, "Madame, ye shulde be ioyfulle and use to playe and forto disporte you, and lete your good olde husbonde slepe, for he takithe no rewarde but vnto hys reste." But she vnderstode and wost wel what suche speche was worthe, and she answered ayen, "In as moche as myn husbonde is olde and desirithe reste, so moche more y am bounde to wayte vpon \*his seruice, to kepe hym in reste and from alle dissese, in as moche as it may be in my powere, for that is my play and my gladnesse to be aboute hym, and forto do hym seruice unto his ease and plesaunce." For as forto saye as for her beauute and her youthe, there were mani that entreted her vnto diuerse worldely plesaunces, but she wolde neuer consent vnto no thinge contrarie vnto goodnesse, she was so true vnto her husbonde. And after, whan her lorde was dede, yef she were of good gouernaunce in her mariage, she was alwey after a deuoute lady and right good vnto God and vnto the worlde, and wolde neuer consent to be married, but euer forthe she leued in chastite and clenness, and therfor she owithe welle forto be

\* [Fol. 50b.  
col. 2.]

Of a noble  
and young  
wife whose  
husband was  
very old,

whom she  
served con-  
tinually,

though often  
prayed to  
leave him,

saying, 'my  
play and glad-  
\* [Fol. 51,  
col. 1.]  
ness is to  
serve him.'

Therefore she  
should be  
praised for  
her chastity  
and goodnesse,  
  
as a good  
example unto  
others.

These ladies  
were true to  
their mar-  
riage,  
\* [Fol. 51,  
col. 2.]

and took no  
new hus-  
bands,

• as some that  
wed only for  
'fleshly  
delight,'

and after  
repent.  
Nightingales  
sing when  
amorous, but  
are after-  
wards silent.

putte in remembraunce and storied in scripture with other good ladyes. Al were it so that she was a gret princesse, yet she owithe duly to be recomended in alle worship and praisinge because of her goodnesse; the whiche is good ensauple and mirrour vnto other ladyes and women, for the praisinge of hem that loue worshippe and trouthe shulde euermore be had in remembraunce as they haue deserued. And therfor y haue tolde you of such ladyes as haue be now late in oure dayes; but and y wolde reherce, and telle you of alle my matere, it shulde be longe, for there be mani worthy ladies in the reaume of Fraunce, and in other countries also. But these ladyes of the whiche y haue spoken vnto you, thei be withoute ani reproche, and aproued in thaire ma\*riage, trew ladies, and afterwarde they leued chastely and deuoutly before God in worships and vnto the worlde, and refused alle vayne plesaunces, wherfor that no creatoure might neuer speke of hem but in al goodnesse. And also ye may vnderstonde that these ladyes toke none nwe husbondes for worldely loue or fleshely plesaunce, al be it so that ofte tymes highe astate obeyethe for love and plesaunce vnto lowe degree, as there haue be diuerse ladyes that haue do; so good entent shal haue grace, but mariage that be made in other wise, there befallithe gret inconuenient, as suche as wedde hem selff ayenst the wyll of kynne and frendes, and only for the fleshely delite. And whanne the tyme rennithe as from somer to wynter, as whanne plesaunce is fayled, and they see hem selff lesse honoured, thanne ofte tymes they falle into repentaille, so that loue and plesaunce is foryete; as the nightyngales, as longe as they be amerouses, they synge plesauntly day and night, and whanne they haue reioysed thaire amorous desyre and plesaunces, thei make abace melodye, for thei synge no more. So that y passe ouer atte this tyme to speke ani more of these ladyes, or of such matere. But, my faire doughters, take hereby a good ensauple, that yef be fortune ye falle into good mariage, and afterwardes God take youre husbondes from you, wedde you not ayen vnausely for vain plesaunce, but werkithe bi the counsaile of youre true

frendes, and not by the instaunce of \* louinge peramours ; for there befallithe gret repentyng vnto hem that putte thaire plesaunce in suche vnsuertee. And, therfor, to kepe the honoure, and that ye entre not into none reproche, but that alle goodnesse and worship may come to you, close youre eres and herkenithe not vnto the speche of faire spekers, for in suche wise mani women haue be deceyued. But as now y wille cese of this matere.

\* [Fol. 51b.  
col. 1.]

## CHAPTER CXVI.

## [Of the honour and respect that attends a good life.]

**M**y right dere doughtres, yef ye knewe the grete honoure and the gret welthe that is forto be welles renomed, to bere a good name, and to be welles spoken of, whiche is one of the grettest grace that may be in the worlde, ye wolde putte youre herte in payne to entende therto ; right as a knight that desirithe worshippe and vaillaunce, the whiche he wynnithe by gret payne and laboure in hete and colde, and puttithe his body in so mani aduentures of dethe, and alle for to wyne worshippe and good name, as by straunge viages, by harde assautes, by diuerse gret batailes, and by mani other gret perilles in armes. And after that he hathe suffered thus moche, thanne he is drawe forthe and putte vnto moche worshippe, and the princez yeue hym gret lordshypes and gouernaunces, for his noblesse and for he hathe no paraille in honoure of good name. Right so it is of a good woman, that in alle places berithe a goode name of honoure and goodnesse, as she that hathe atte al tymes putte her payne in trauaile to kepe her body \*vndefouled and in clenness, and refused the delytes of youthe and of foule plesaunces, wherby she hathe wonne good name and moche worshippe, for euermore to be putte in the nombre of good ladyes and of alle good women, wherby she hathe also wonne the loue of God, and of her husbonde, and of the worlde, and the saluacion of the sowle, the whiche is the worthiest and the beste of alle. For the sowle is the precious marguarite vnto

To bear a  
good name is  
to have great  
honour,

and worth  
trouble to  
attain and  
preserve.

A woman to  
have a good  
name must  
keep herself  
clean,

\* [Fol. 51b.  
col. 2.]

and so win  
the love of  
God, her hus-  
band, and the  
world.



In God's  
sight a good  
woman is as  
much worth  
as a good  
knight.

God. And so it is ensauple to alle creatoures, in what wise they owe to preise a good woman ; for she is as moche worthe in the sight of God for her goodnesse [and] vertu, as is the knight for his armes and worthinesse in bataile. But the right rule fallithe as now, for honoure is not yeue vnto hem atte al tymes that best hathe deserued it, as it might be shewed in diuerse causes, who so wold as forto saye of mani good women.

## CHAPTER CXVII.

[How foolish young men were reproved by their elders.]

Good women  
were praised,  
but others  
were scorned  
and put out of  
good com-  
pany.

AN[d], therfor, y shalle telle you upon that as y haue herde mani lordes and knightes speke, how good women were praised and had gret worship, and suche as were blamed of her gouernannce how they were scorned and putte out of companie of alle other good women. And it is not yet longe tyme agoo that suche custume was vsed, that there was no woman so hardy that durst aforce her self, for she were blamed of foly to putte her self in the companie and felawship of hem that were vnreproued, that they shulde with gret disworship be putte away from hem. As y shalle telle you \* of .ij. knightes that were in that tyme, whiche were called Sir Raoul de Luge & Sir Piere de Luge, and they were bothe bretheren and knightes of gret worshippe, the whiche as in the dayes desire to do armes and sought worship in straunge cuntreies, and they hadde gret renome, as Charmylour, Cicault, or Sarmitre, wherfor they hadde thayre speche and were herde in alle places where as they come, for thaire worshippe and good name. Wherupon that and they sawe ani yonge man of thaire lynages do ani thinge that were not wele vnto worshippe, thei wolde blame hem, and teche hem before alle peple. Wherfor yonge men dred hem in alle places. And as y haue herde telle, the said Sir Piere de Luge he was atte the feste where as were gret foyson of lordes, ladies, knightes, and squieres and gentilwomen, and so there come in a yonge squier before hem that was sette atte dyner and salued the companie, and he

\* [Fol. 52,  
col. 1.]  
There were  
two knights,  
brethren, of  
great renown,

who, when  
they saw any  
young men do  
evil, would  
blame them  
before people.

was clothed in a cote hardy upon the guyse of Almayne, & in this wise he come further before the lordes and the ladies, and made hem goodly reuerence. And so the said *Sir* Piere called this yonge squier with his voys before alle the statis, and saide vnto hym and axed hym, where was his fedylle or hys ribible, or suche an instrument as longithe vnto a mynstralle. "*Syr*," saide the squier, "y canne not medille me of such thinge, it is not my crafte nor science." "*Sir*," saide the knight, "y canne not trowe that ye saye, for ye be counterfait in youre araye, and lyke vnto a mynstralle, for y haue knowe herebefore alle youre \*aunsetours, and the knightes and squiers of youre kyn, whiche were alle worthi men, but y sawe neuer none of hem that were counterfait, nor that clothed hem in suche array." And thanne the yonge squier ansuered the knight and saide, "*Sir*, by as moche as it mislykithe you, it shalle be amended," and cleped a purseuaunt, and gaue him the cote hardy. And he abled hym selff in an other gowne, and come ayen into the halle, & thanne the aunycen knight saide opinly, "This yonge squier shalle haue worshipec, for he hathe trowed and do bi the counsaile of the elder, withoute ani contraryenge." For alle yonge folke that troue and be counsailed by the techinge and ensaumples of the olde wise, and they do and gouerne hem selff there after, they may not faile to come vnto gret worshipec. So that hereby is a good ensaample how that euery yonge man or yonge woman owithe to receyue the doctrine and techinge of hem that bene thaire eldres and wiser thanne they; for alle that they saye and teche, it is for the profite of hem that be yonge, but the yonge folkes now a dayes lust not to do there after, but they haue dyspite whanne they be blamed of thayre folye, and whanne they be more wyser thanne suche as be moche more cunnynge, and as haue seyn the cours of the worlde longe tyme afore thaire birthe. For that is gret pite as in youthe to be vncunynge and vknowynge of hym selff, for euery gentille man or gentil woman owithe for to haue gret ioye to lerne and for to \*be blamed of euery vice.

And once when a young knight came vainly dressed, they pretended to think him a fiddler:

\* [Fol. 52, col. 2.]

and so the young knight altered his dress,

and was praised for his respect to good counsel;

An example that the young should be guided by the advice of the old.

\* [Fol. 52b. col. 1.]

For who so is a gentille nature desirith the naturally gentillesse and thinges vertuous, and louith the hym that counsaileth and techith the hym for his beter; but a cherlous condicion is alle contrarie, for he desirith the nother vertu ne cuning, and he lackith the and hatith the hym that saith the hym trouthe or counsaileth the hym to worships. Now haue y shewed you how in wyse they chastised the yonge men in the dayes by good counsaile, and also how thei gaue good ensamples unto the yonge ladyes and gentille women.

## CHAPTER CXVIII.

[How ladies lose respect and honour by careless living.]

In the time of  
peace and  
feasting,

any lady of  
ill renown,  
even though  
of high birth,

was put  
below those  
of good fame,

\* [Fol. 52b.  
col. 2.]

AS forto saie in that tyme it was the tyme of pees, & withoute werre, whanne the lordes and ladyes, the knightes and squiers of eueri astate in thaire degre, eche fested and felawshipped with other in mani reuelles, and in diverse plesaunces, as thei assembled atte mani tymes, bi gret loue and for honoure. The good knightes in that tyme, and hit befelle by ani aduenture that lady or damoiselle hadde ani il renoun or was blamed of folye & of her honoure, and she wolde putte her self before ani of the good ladyes or damoyselle, alle were it so that she were of gret estat and of highe byrthe and in richesse of mariage, anone the knight shulde of right come and saye vnto the said lady before alle, "Madame, displese you not thoughe this lady or damoyselle of lower astate goo before or stonde aboue you, al be it so she be not of so noble lynage and of so gret richesse as ye be of, but for as moche as she is not bla\*med of her worships, and therfor she is put before you in the nombre of good ladyes and of other goode women, to receiue the worship that she hathe deserued, and for to be know as she is withoute defaute. But yt may not be saide so of you; whiche thinge me displeisith, for here is none other assemble, but to worship hem that haue deserued, and therfor meruaile you not hereof." And in this wyse the aunceyn knightes shulde

furst putte them vnto worshippe that were of good name and renome, wherof they hadden gret cause forto thank God, that had geue hem grace and might to kepe hem in suche clenness and vertu, wherthorughe they were putte vnto so gret reuerence and honoure. And other for thaire folye receyued gret disworship and blame. And therfor it was good ensauple vnto alle gentille women, that, for the blame that they might here one of another, they doutted and dradden forto do ani thinge other wise but well. But now atte this day, and that is pitee, there be mani that bere gret blame, and neuer the latter yet haue they gret worships and more made of thanne suche as be right good, the whiche is straunge ensauple, but there be sum that sayen therfor asmoche worship haue they that do amys as they that be vndefamed, so that it berithe no force to do ille as forto do well; alle passithe and vnder one thanke. But that is nother wel thought ne wel saide, for it is a gret vice. For truly, what chere or what semblaunce that men make vnto \*suche women in thaire presence, whan thei departithe from them a felow saithe vnto another, "Loo! suche a gentille woman, she is right curteys and kynde, for she wille suffre you to do with her alle youre plesaunce, and mani a good felaw hathe had his parte." And thus saithe one to another of suche women. And in this wyse, he that spekithe right fayre and makithe her reuerence as his lady before her, whanne they be departed he spekithe suche worshippe of her as she hathe deserued. But such women as be foles aperceiue it not, but they seme that no man coude knowe nor aspie thaire faute, for they be so bolde in thaire synne and wille not vnderstonde nor knowe thaire shame, so that the tyme is chaunged. But it were moche beter forto shewe hem thaire blame and thaire synne, as the aunycen knightes sheued vnto women thaire foly in that tyme, as here before y haue tolde you. Wherfor y wolde that the tyme were come ayen, to that entent to encrece the worship of alle goode, and forto correct [and] amende suche as be worthi and blame.

More and women thought upon the tyme that was before

Wherefore  
thanks should  
be given to  
God.

But now  
those who are  
blamed have  
none the less  
worship.

\* [Fol. 53,  
col. 1.]

Men speak  
well of women  
to their faces,  
but defame  
them behind  
their backs;

but foolish  
women per-  
ceive it not.

Women  
should think  
more of old  
times,

when a  
woman taken  
in adultery  
was stoned or  
burned ;

\* [Fol. 53,  
col. 2.]

but in Eng-  
land, France,  
and the  
Netherlands  
there is no  
justice for this  
sin.

Yet women  
that do amiss  
live in blame  
and slander,

of which there  
are many  
examples in  
old times.

\* [Fol. 53b,  
col. 1.]

the birthe of oure lorde Ihesu Crist, whiche was the space of .v. thousande yeere, as of women that were defamed, and most of wedded women, and it might be proued upon her by tweyn witnessis that and ani other man had fleshely companie with her but her husbonde, she shulde be brent or \*stoned vnto the dethe, so noble and trwe was the lawe of God and of Moyses, ther was no richesse of golde ne syluer, nor for none estate, pore ne riche, and yet y vnnethe knowe no royaumes atte this daye, but the reaumes of Fraunce and of Inglonde and the Base Almaine, but that there is do iustice upon that synne, and the woman deyed that were founde in suche blame assone as the trouthe is yknowe, that is to saye in Prouince, in Spaine, in Aragone, and in mani othe reaumes and contrieis. In sum places thaire throtes be cutte, in sum places thei be brent, in sum places bothe man and woman putte alle quik in erthe, for the shame and punission of the synne. And this ensaumples is goode for alle women to here, how be it that there is no iustice do thereon in this reame, as there is do in other, yet neuertheles suche women as do amisse and use synne and folye, they lyue in blame, in esclaundre, and in gret disworship, and lese the name of thaire estat and noblesse before God and in this worlde, as forto yeue langage to speke vnto iangeloures, that atte alle tymes haue thaire disportes and scorningges in suche foule plesaunces, and outre hem self from the grace of God, and in the loue of the worlde, and departe hem self from the companie of alle good women, and putte hem self oute of memorie of good name and renome for euermore. As it is conteyned in the olde ensaumples of tyme passed, wherof there might be mani ensaumples wrete, whiche were a \*longe thinge to write, and y shalle shewe you bi ensauple as for the highest and the noblest of whiche holy scripture makithe mencion, how almighti God praisithe the bounte of a good woman. And syn God with his owne mouthe praisithe so highli a good woman, welle owithe alle other creatoures to loue and praise alle suche as be good.

## CHAPTER CXIX.

## [How Christ speaks of good women.]

IT is contained in the gospelle of the virgines, as oure Lorde preched and taught the peple, and he spake vpon the mater of women that liueden in clenness, he likened suche a woman vnto a precious margarite, the whiche is a bright thinge, rounde, white, and clene, a stone so clere and faire that there is no tache therein, nor spotte of vncleane; and this is saide be a woman that is not wedded, and she lyuith in uirginite, clenness, and chastite; or ellys bi a woman that is wedded, and she kepith truly and honestly the sacrament of mariage, & also by them that worshipfully and perfittly kepe thaire wedwhode, that lyuen in chastite and in sobriete. These be the .iiij. manere of women the whiche God praisith, and likenith hem vnto the precious margarite, that is alle faire withoute ani foule tache or ani foulennesse; for this saith the holy scripture, there is no thing beter thanne a good woman and rather more praised before God & the aungelle thanne man. And by cause and raisone that woman is of more light courage thanne man, that is for asmoche as the woman \*is ycome and was drawe oute of the man, and in asmoche as she is more feble to withstonde the temptaciones of the flesshe, whanne she withstondith and ouercomith the flesshe in so moche she is worthi to haue the more merite and thanke before the man. And therfor God comparaged a good woman vnto a precious margarite, and also the scripture saith in another place, how it were a foule thinge to take a faire suete rose and putte hem in a stynking vesselle; right so the clenness of a mayde or of a good woman that she misuse it not with vncleane men, that desyren false fleshely plesaunce; but the women kepe euermore the clenness of uirginite, or elle trewe mariage, so that the foule synne of lecherie deface not the lyknesse of the precious margarite, the clenness of

Christ compared a chaste woman to a precious stone;

for a chaste maiden or a true wife

is greatly praised before God.

\* [Fol. 53b. col. 2.]

The Scripture says a fair rose should not be put in a stinking vessel, nor a woman go with an unclean man.

If wives,  
maids, or  
widows mis-  
use their  
virtues, they  
are like roses  
in stinking  
vessels.

\* [Fol. 54,  
col. 1.]

Unchaste  
maidens lose  
their mar-  
riage; false  
wives lose the  
love of God.

True mar-  
riage is  
ordained of  
God, and the  
devil has no  
power therein.

maydenhode, the sacrement of mariage, the faithe of God and holy chirche, and the chastenesse of weduhode. For and these .iij. manere of woman misuse the vertues, these vertues beforesaide, the maide her maydenhode, the wyff her mariage, the wedwe he[r] weduhode, thanne be they liche vnto the roses in a stinking vesselle, for thei haue lost thaire fayrenesse, thaire suetnesse, and thaire vertu, for the vncleennesse that they be inne; and thanne they be right not apparent nor like vnto the precious margarite. Wel aught a woman be displeased and hate her selff in her vngoodly lyuinge, wher for her defaute and foly that she is putte oute of the nombre and memorie of \*alle good women. As wherfor they aught wel to thenke upon these thinges, and she that is to marie and to be wedded, and she defoule her maydenhode, she lesithe her mariage and her worship and her good name euermore, she deseruith the shame and hate of her frendes; of women that be wedded, in brekinge thaire mariage thei lese alle worshippe, the loue of God, of her husbondes, and of alle her frendes, she lesithe alle worldly prosperite, and causithe her owne shame continually. For the harme the gret defamacion that fallithe bi that cause of brekinge of mariage yt were to longe forto reherce, but sothely it is gret displeaunce vnto God, for the more partie alle suche as breken thaire mariage as man or woman, there is departing of loue, falsinge the sacrement, and synne dampnable. And the deuelle hathe suche pouere in hem, that thei make hem forto haue so gret delite in thaire synne and rybauudise, and so brenninge plesaunce, that they wol neuer eschew thaire synne, so that thei pursue vnto thaire endeles dampnacion. But true mariage is ordeined be God in the plesaunce betwene man and woman, is withoute dedly synne; and therfor the fende of helle hathe no pouer in that holy sacrement, but he peynithe hym euermore to eschauufe and to draw the man or woman by sum falce delite vnto synne; and, as a smithe that euer blowinge in the fire, and right so seruith the ennemy of helle that besiethe hym euer forto kendille and lyght the .fere flame of dedly synne witheinne

the hertis of man and woman bi fals delite, whereby \*he bringithe the sowles vnto helle. For that is alle his crafte and ioye, as a chosen hunter that chasithe alle the day, and atte the night he takithe the beest and ledithe it forthe with hym; and right so the ennemy dothe with suche men and women as lyuen upon thaire fleshely delite, man, mayde, wiff, or wedow, as it is saide before. And so saithe the scripture, that alle suche as vsen to lyue after the brenninge desire of luxurie, and they haue take thaire fowle stynkinge fleshely delite, right so they shalle be led into the brennyng flawme of the fire of helle, as saithe an ermite in the lyff of the olde fadres, "It is rayson that suche as haue lyued in the brenninge plesaunce of fleshely delite in this worlde, right so to be rewarded with the brennyng flawme of the fyre of helle, by right that one hete forto duelle euermore with that other hete." And as almighti God saithe, "Ther shalle nor good dede nor good lyff vnrewarded, nor no wickednesse vnponished."

\* [Fol. 54, col. 2.]

Man, maid, wife, or widow, that live in fleshly delight,

shall be rewarded with the fire of hell.

## CHAPTER CXX.

[How a knight's daughter lost her marriage  
by her vanity.]

I Shalle telle you of a ensaample of a knightes doughter that lost her mariage bi her nisite. Ther was a knight that had .iiij. daughters, of the whiche the eldest was wedded, and there was a knight that axed the secounde doughter bothe for londe and mariage; in so moche that the knight come for to see her that shulde be his wyff, and forto be assured and fyamed togedre, yef thei were plesed eche with other, for neither of hem ne hadde saie other before that tyme. And the damoiselle that knew of the knightes \*comyng, she araied her self in the best guyse that she coude, forto haue a sclender and a faire shapin body, and she clothed her in a cote hardy vnfurred, the whiche satte right streite upon her, and it was gret colde, gret froste, and gret wynde; and for the simple vesture that she

A knight had three daughters,

and another knight came to wed one of them,

\* [Fol. 54b. col. 1.]

who arrayed herself simply to look well.



And the cold  
made her so  
pale that he  
chose her  
sister instead  
of her,

against the  
advice of his  
friends.

\* [Fol. 54b.  
col. 2.]

But when they  
were married,  
he saw her  
that he had  
refused  
warmly clad  
and looking  
better than  
her sister his  
wife:

had vpon, and for the gret colde that was atte that tyme, the coloure of the mayde was defaced, and she waxe al pale and blake of colde. So this knight that was come forto see her, and behelde the coloure of her alle dede and pale, and after that he loked vpon that other suster that she had, and sawe her coloure fresshe and ruddy as a rose, for she was wel clothed, and warme ayenst the colde, as she that thought not vpon no mariage atte so shorte a tyme, the knight behelde furst that one suster and after that other. And whanne he had dyned, he cleped two of his frendes and of his kynne, and saide vnto hem, "Sires! we be come hedir for to see the doughters of the lorde of this place, and y know wel that y shulde haue whiche that y wolde chese, wherfor y wolde haue the thridde doughter." And his frendes ansuered hym, that it was more worship vnto hym, for to haue the elder. "Faire frendes," saide the knight, "ye see but litelle advantage thereinne, for ye knowe wel thei haue an elder suster, the whiche is wedded; and also y see the yongest, the fairest and fresshest of coloure, more plesaunt thanne her secounde suster, for whom y was spoken vnto forto haue in mariage; and therfor \* my plesaunce is to haue her." And the knight axed the thridde doughter, which was graunted hym; wherof folke were meruailed, and in especial the mayde that went forto haue be wedded vnto the same knight. So it happed within short tyme after, thei married the yonge damay-selle, the whiche the knight hadde refused bi cause the colde had paled her coloure and withdrowe her fayrenesse, after whanne she was welle clothed and furred, and the wedir was chaunged to warmer, her colour and fairenesse was comen ayen, so that she was fressher and fayrer an hundred parte thanne was her suster, the knightes wiff; and so the knight saide vnto her, "My faire suster, whanne y was to wedde, and y come forto see you, ye were not so faire bi the seuenthe part as ye be now, for ye be now right faire and welle coloured, and tho ye were alle pale and of other coloure, and now ye passe youre suster my wyff in fayrenesse, wherof y haue gret meruaile." And thanne the knightis wiff ansuered, "My lorde, y shal telle you how

it was ; my suster thought wel that ye shulde come forto fiaunce her as for youre wiff, and forto make her gentille, and smalle, and faire bodied, she clothed her in a symple cote hardye, not doubled, and it was colde wynter, and gret froste, and gret wynde, and that permuueded her coloure, and y, that thought asmuche to haue suche welthe and worship as forto haue you vnto my lorde withoute ani nisete, y clothed my selff in warme  
 . . . . .

when his  
wife told him  
how it was—

[*The Manuscript ends here, and the concluding part of the book is given from Caxton's printed translation.*]

I was wel clothed with furred gounes that keppe my body warme, wherfore I had better colour than she had, whereof I thanke God, for therfore I gate your loue ; and blessyd be the houre that my suster clothed her self so lyght, for yf it had not be so, ye had not take me for to haue leftte her." Thus loste, as ye haue herd, theldest doughter her maryage bycause she coynted her self. Now haue ye herd good ensample how one ought not to coynte her body for to shewe it small and better shapen, & specially in the wynter, in so moche that she lost her manere and colour. As ones it befell to syre Foucques de Laual, as he told me vpon the fayt of this ensample, of whome I shal speke and telle vnto yow what that happed to hym.

an example  
to dress our-  
selves warmly  
in winter.

How loue wylle be keppe warme. Capitulo C. xx.

Syre Foucques de Laual was a fayr knyght, clene & wel besene among other, & was of good maner, and of fayr maynten. It happed to hym, as he told me, that ones he was gone for to see his peramours in the wynter season, that the froste was grete, and the wether passyng cold. He \*thenne hadde in

A knight  
went to see  
his paramour  
in cold  
weather.

\* i. ij. b.

But he was  
thinly clad,

and the wind  
made him  
pale ;

and the lady  
preferred  
before him  
another  
knight,  
warmly  
dressed.

But after-  
wards he  
clothed him-  
self warmly,  
and was then  
chosen by the  
lady.

the mornynge coynted hym self of a scarlatte gowne wel broudzed, & of a hood of scarlatte sengle & wythoute furringe, and nought els he had on hym, sauf only his fyn sherte ; for he had no mantell, neyther gloues in his handes. The wynd and the cold were grete, wherfor he had soo grete cold, that he became of colour black and pale, for the perles ne the precious stones, wiche were on the broudzyng of his sengle gowne, couthe gyue hym no hete, ne kepe hym fro the cold. There came another knyght, which also was ameraus of that lady, but he was not so gay aoured, ne so sengle of clothes, but he had on hym good and warme gownes, & had a mantell, and a double hood, and was reed as a cok and had a good lyuynge colour, The lady thenne welcomed this knyght, and maade to hym better chere than she dyd to syre Foucques, and held with hym better companye. And said to syre Foucques, "Syre, hold yow nere the fyre, for I doubte that ye be not al hool, for youre colour is dede and pale." And he ansuerd that his herte was ioyous and well at his ease.

This other knyght was fayrer to the lady syght than Foucques, but within a whyle after syre Foucques aspyed the knyght, whiche was goynge toward the place of his peramours. He arayed hym otherwyse than he was wonte to doo, and so moche hyed him, that he came thyder as soone as the other knyght dyd, for to preue how the mater and his faytte shold ende. But certainly he was thenne take of his lady for the fayrest and best coloured. Wherfore he told me how loue wylle be kepte hote and warme, and how that he had approuued hit. Therfore hit is grete folye to kepe hys body sengle of clothes, for to seme to the folkes syght better maad and fayrer of body. Yet vpon this matere I wylle reherce vnto you a grete merueylle, how many one deyed for cold.

Of the folysse loue whiche surprysed and ouercame  
the Galoys and the Galoyeses, wherfore many one of  
them deyed for cold. Capitulo C xxi.

F Ayre daughters, I shalle telle yow of the Galoys and Galoyeses,  
how the deuylle by his arte made many of them to deye  
for cold, with the helpe of the flamme of Venus, goddesse of loue  
and of lecherye. It byfelle thenne in the partyes of Peytou and  
in other countrees nyghe, that the goddesse Venus, whiche hath  
grete power vpon yougthe, that is to wete vpon the yonge folke,  
for somme she maketh to be ameraus of loue resonable, and  
other of folysse loue and vnresonable, wherof somme lese  
theyr honour and worship, and other bothe body & sowle, &  
made many knyghtes and squyers, ladyes and damoyseles, to loue  
peramours eche other, and to make an ordenaunce of a moche  
sauage and wyld guyse, and ageynst the kynde of the tyme,  
whiche ordenaunce was this, that in the somer they shold be  
clothed hote and warme with theyr furred gownes and with  
mantels and double hoodes, and euer fyre they shold haue in  
theyr chemenyess, were it neuer so grete a hete; and that they  
shold make of the somer wynter. & thus to the contrarye,  
in the wynter tyme, and as it was hard frosen, these Galoys &  
Galoyeses dyd on theyre shertes but only a shorte and sengle  
gown withoute lynynge, and had no mantell ne hood, but sengle,  
for no grete cold ne wynd that myght come. And yet more,  
theyr chambres were withoute fyre and dayly made swyped  
clene, and yf at that season ony herbe or grasse or somme  
thyng fresshe and grene myght be found, it was had into  
theyr chambres & strawed on the floor. And vpon theyr beddes  
they had thurgh al the nyght but only a sengle and lyght  
couerlet, and nomore they myght haue after theyr owne or-  
dynaunce. Ferthermore, it was ordeyned that as soone as a  
Galoys cam there as a Galoyse was, & yf she had ony husbond,  
he must by this ordenaunce go & take the Galoys horses, whiche  
last was come thyder, and ryde oute of his place & neuer to

In Peytou  
the devil  
caused many  
to die of cold,

and to wear  
warm clothes,  
and have  
large fires in  
summer,

and wear thin  
clothing and  
go without  
fires in the  
wynter.

Also the  
husband was  
to wait vpon  
his wife's  
visitors.

come ageyne as long as the Galoys shold be with his wyf. And also, yf her husbond were a Galoys, & went to see his peramours another Galoyse, & found her husbond with her, it had be grete shame to the husbond, yf he had abyden at home neyther to haue ordeyned ony thyng whyles the Galoys had be with his wyf, for he had thenne no more power within his hows than had a straunger. This lyf \* lasted longe whyle, vnto the tyme that the most parte of them was dede and perysshed of the grete cold whiche they suffred. Many of the Galoys deyde in theyr ladyes bedde, and so dede in lyke wyse the Galoysses with theyr frendes and peramours, scornynge them that were warme and wel clothed. And som of them were to whome men must dysseuere theyr teethe wyth knyues, and toste and rost them before the fyre, as a chyken hard of froste. Wherefore I doubte moche that these Galoysses & Galoys, whiche deyde by suche maner, were martired by loue, & that as they deyde of cold, they shalle haue to the contrarye a grete hete and a warme clothynge in the pytte of helle. For yf they had suffred for the loue of God, whiche suffred soo moche for them, the tenthe parte of the payne and dolour whiche they dyd suffre for the fowle delyte of theyr stynkynge lecherye, they shold haue hadde mercy and grete guerdon in the other world. But the deuylle, whiche euer is aboute to make the man and the woman to dysobeye to God, made them to fele gretter delyte and playsaunce in folyshe loue, than to doo somme seruyse vnto God. And by this reason whiche wel is approued, how the deuyll tempteth and essayeth man and woman, and holdeth in perylle bothe the soule and the body; and hou he gyueth folyshe playsaunces and many euylle maners, that is to wete, somme by couetyse to drawe to hym the good & substaunce of other; and somme he holdeth in grete pryde by the praysyng of them self and dispraysynge of other; some also by enuye, whanne they see other haue more goodes than they; also by glotonye, wherin the body delyteth hym self and maketh hym to falle in to the synne of dronkeshyp, whiche synne taketh fro them reason and entendement and maketh them to fall in to carnal delyte. Eyther also by lecherye

\* Caxton,  
I. iii. b.

And this  
lasted till  
they were  
nearly all  
dead.

But if they  
had suffered  
for the love of  
God one tenth  
part so much,  
they would  
receiue much  
reward in the  
other world.

The devil  
tempteth by  
envy,  
gluttony,

making them to haue their peramours with them, and to loue them wyth folysshe loue and playsaunce, as dyd the folysshe Galoys and Galoyses, and amonge them suche a folysshe and brennyng loue that he brought them to an euylle ende and to deye of dyuerse dethe. But, notwithstanding al this, I saye not but that there is a trewe loue without blame and dishonoure, and wherof moche worship cometh. These ben trewe the whiche requyre nothing wherout may come ony falshed or abusion. \* For he that loueth not trewely, thynketh for to haue dishonoured his loue and her estate; and suche loue is not trewe, but is fals dissymlyng and trecherye. Therfore to grete iustyse may not be made of them, but so moche I telle yow well that ther be of suche folke whiche ben of dyuerse maners, that is to wete some trewe, some fals and deceyuable, and gyue no force at al but to haue theyr fowle delyte and wylle. And many suche folk is as now in this world, wherfore the world is hard to knowe and moche merueyllous. And suche wene wel to knowe them self, but wors they knowe them self than done ony other.

lechery, and  
other vices;

\* Caxton,  
I. liii.

and many  
such are in  
the world.

The argument of the knyght of the Towre and of  
his wyf.

Capitulo C xxij.

**M**y dere doughters, as for to loue peramours I shal tell yow alle the debate and stryf of me and of your moder. I wold susteyne ageynste her that a lady or damoyselle myght loue paramours in certayne caas. For in loue is but good worship, withoute ony euyll be thought in it. In this thenne wherin is thought ony euyll is not loue, but rather it is grete falshede and mauuastyne, wherfore take ye hede, and here ye the grete debate and stryf which was bytwene her and me. Thus thenne I sayd to your moder, "Lady, why shalle not the ladyes and damoysels loue paramours? For in certayne me semeth that in good loue and trewe maye be but welthe and honour, and also the louer is the better therfore, & more gay and ioly; and also the more encouraged to excercyse

I will tell you  
all the debate  
I had with  
your mother  
about love.

I said that in  
love is wealth  
and honour,  
and the lover  
is the better  
for it;

also a lady is  
the better for  
loving.

hym self more ofte in armes, and taketh therfore better maner in al estates, for to please vnto his lady or loue. And in lyke wyse dothe she of whome he is enamoured, for to please hym, the better as ferre as she loueth hym. And also I tell yow that grete almesse it is, whanne a lady or damoyzell maketh a good knyght eyther a good squyer." These ben my reasons.

\* Carton,  
l. iiii. b.

\*The answere whiche the lady of the towre maad vnto  
her lord.

Capitulo C xxiiij.

Then your  
mother said,

THenne answered to me your moder, "Syre, I merueyll me not yf amonge yow men susteyne and holde this reason that al women oughte to loue peramours, but sith this debate and stryf is come before our owne doughters, I wylle answer after myn aduys and intencion, for vnto our children we must hyde nothyng. Ye say, and so done all other men, that a lady or damoyzell is the better worth whan she loueth peramours, and that she shalle be the more gay & of fayr maner and countenance, and how she shalle do grete almesse to make a good knyght. These wordes are but sport and esbatement of lordes and of felawes in a langage moche comyn. For they that saye that alle the honour and worshyppe whiche they gete and haue in comynge to them by there peramours, and that theyr loue encourageth them to goo in vyages, and for to plesse to them by state of armes, but these wordes coste to them but lytyll to say, for to gete the better and sooner the grace and good wylle of theyr peramours. For of suche wordes, and other moche merueyllous, many one vseth full ofte, but how be hit that they saye that for them and for theyr loue they done hit, in good feyth they done it only for to enhaunce them self, and for to drawe vnto them the grace and vayne glory of the world. Therefore I charge yow, my fayre doughters, that in this mater ye byleue not your fader. But I pray yow that ye hold your self clenly

"This is but  
sport;

therefore,  
daughters,  
believe not  
your father.

and without blame, and that ye be not amerous, for many reasons whiche I shalle reherce vnto yow. Fyrste, I saye not but that euery good woman of age maye loue well and better the one than the other, that is to wete, folke of worship and honour, and them also that shalle counceylle her for her owne helthe & worship. And thus men oughte to loue by this manere the one more than the other. But as for to be so ferforth enamoured, in soo moche that this loue be mayster of her, and maketh them to falle in somme fowle and shamefull delyte, somtyme with ryght and somtyme with wronge, for the watche whiche men \*haue vpon this shameful dede or feate, and also suche dishonour and escry, whiche soone is not put oute, and by the false watches & bachyters whiche ben neuer cessyng to talke of, som euylle rather than of somme good, wherby they take away & dyffamen the good renomme of the good wymmen, and of many a good lady. And therfore alle wymmen whiche ben not wedded may kepe and hold them self fro hit, and that for many reasons. The fyrste reason is by cause that a woman whiche is enamoured of a man maye not serue God of no good herte ne trewe as she dyd before. For many one I haue herd saye, the whiche haue ben amerous in theyr yougthe, that when they were in the chirche theyre thought and melancolye made them ofte to thynke vnto theyr delytes and to theyr peramours more than they dyd to the seruyse of God. And also the arte of loue is of suche kynde, that whanne one is in the chirche to here masse and the dyuyne seruyse, and as the preest holdeth the body of oure Lord bytwene his handes, than cometh most to his mynde euylle and fowle thoughtes. This is the arte or crafte of the goddesse that men call Venus, the whiche had the name of a planete, as I herd saye of a good and trewe man, whiche preched and sayd how ones the deuylle entred into the body of a dampned woman, whiche was ioly and gaye and moche amerous. The deuylle that was within her body made her to doo many fals myracles; wherfor the paynmys helde her for a goddesse, and worshipped her as a

Every good woman may love people of worship,

\* Caxton, l. v.

but all women should keep from being the slaves of love.

Evil love is the art and craft of the goddess Venus.



Venus gave  
counsel to  
the Trojans,

and is the  
goddess of  
love, and  
leadeth  
people to  
lechery.

\* Caxton,  
I. v. b.

Two queens  
went to  
church, and  
did evil there;

wherefore  
they died, and  
the knights,  
their para-  
mours, were  
flayed alive.

god. And this Venus was she that gaf counccylle to the Troians that they shold sende Parys, the sone of kyng Priamus, into Grece, and that she shold make hym rauysshe and haue with hym the fayrest lady of al Grece, wherof she sayd trouthe. For Parys dyd rauysshe the fair Helayne, the wyf of the kynge Menelaus, for the whiche faytte or dede were slayne afterward more than .xl. kynges and .xii. C M other persones and mo. Wherof this Venus was of al thys grete meschyef pryncypall cause. She was an euylle goddesse fulle of euylle temptacion. She is the goddesse of loue, whiche kyndelet h and chauffeth the amerous hertes, and maketh them to thynke bothe day and nyght to the ioie and foule delytes of lechery; and specially whan they be at the masse or heryng \* the dyuyn seruyse, the deuyl causeth this for to trouble their feythe and theyr deuocion whiche they haue toward oure Lord. And knowe ye for certayne, my fayr doughters, that a woman whiche is amerous shalle neuer sette her herte to God, ne she shall not saye deuoutely her houres or matyns, ne the hert open for to here the dyuyue seruyse of God. Wherof I shall telle yow an ensample. Two quenes were at this syde of the see, which in Lent, vpon the holy thursday, in the passion weke, took theyr fowle delytes and playsaunce within the churche duryng the seruyse dyuyne, and rested not of theyr foly tylle hit was alle done. Wherfore God, whiche was displeased wyth them for theyr enorme and fowle synne, made theyr fowle dede and faytte to be openly knowen amonge the folke, in suche wyse that they were take and putte vnder a grete and heuy coope of lede, and there they deyde of an euylle dethe. And the two knyghtes theyre putyers deyde also, as they that were flayne, they beyng yet on lyue. Now maye ye see how theyr fals loue was euylle and dampnable, and how the temptacion of Venus, the goddesse of loue and lady of lechery, tempted them so moche, that she made them to take theyr fowle plesaunce in suche holy tyme as vpon the thursday and holy frydaye in the passyon weke. By this ensample is wel sene and knowen

how that euery woman amorous is more tempted within the chyrche than in eny other place. And the same is the fyrst reason how a yonge woman must kepe herself fro suche folysshe loue, and not be in no wyse amorous. The other rayson is by cause of many gentylle men, whiche ben so fals and deceyuable, that they requyre euery gentylle woman that they may finde; and to them they swere that they shalle kepe to them their feythe and be trewe to them, and shalle loue them without falshed or deceyuauunce, and that rather they shold deye than to thynke ony vylonye or dishonoure, and that they shalle be the better preysed for the loue of them, and that, yf they haue ony good and worship, it shalle come by them. And thus they shalle shewe and saye to them so many reasons and abusions, that a grete meruaylle is to here hem speke. And yet more they gyue oute of theyr brestes grete and fayned syghes, and make as they were thynkyng and melancolyous, \* and after they cast a fals loke. And thenne the good and debonayr wymmen, that sene them, supposen that they be esprysed of trewe and feythfull loue. But all suche maner of folke whiche vsen to make suche semblaunt, ben but deceyuours or begylers of the ladyes and damoysels. For there is no lady ne damoysell that wold here them but that they shold be deceyued of them by theyr fals reasons, whiche they shold not here. These ben contrary to the feythfulle and trewe louers. For he that loueth with god and trewe loue, as he cometh before his peramours, he is ferynge and dredefull lest he doo ony thyng that may displease her; for he is not so hardy to discouere ne say one onely word. And yf he loue her wel, I wene that he shalle be thre or four yere er he dar saye his secrete vnto her. But thus do not the fals louers; for they praye al them that they fynd as aboue is sayd, and are not in drede ne in fere to saye al that cometh vpon theyr fals tongues, and no shame ne vergoyne they haue of hit; and al that whiche they maye vnderstand of them, they reherce and telle it amonge theyr felawes. And of them they hold theyre talkyng, wherof they laugh and scorne and

Many men are  
deceivable,  
and mislead  
women by  
false promises,

\* Caxton,  
I. vi.

to whom no  
woman can  
listen with-  
out evil,

and being  
after mocked  
and scorned  
of them.

take theyr disporte of hit. And thus by suche a waye they mocke and scorne the ladyes and damoyseles, and make newe talkynges and lesynges of them whiche before were neuer sayd ne spoken of. For they to whom they tellen hit, put to it rather somme euyl than somme good. In so moche that fro word to word, and by suche mockyng and fryuolles, many ladyes and damoyseles ben ofte blamed.

**How a woman ought not to here the wordes or talkynges of hym that requyreth her of loue. Capitulo C xxiiij.**

If a man  
begin to talk  
of such things,

leave him, or  
call another  
to hear also."

\* [Caxton,  
I. vi. b.]

**A**Nd to thende ye be not deceyued, kepe you wel fro the talkynges of them; and yf one begynne to resoune and talke with yow of suche mater, lete hym alone, or els calle to you somme other body to here hym say what he wil, and thus ye shalle voyde and breke his talkynges. And knowe you for certayne, that yf ye doo thus ones or twyes, \*he shalle nomore speke to yow therof, but in good feyth at the last he shalle preyse and drede you, and shalle saye, 'this woman is assured and ferme.' And by this maner of waye ye shalle not be put in theyr ianglory and talkynges, and shall not also haue no blame ne diffame of the world."

**How the knyght answereth to his wyf. Capitulo C xxv.**

The knight  
replies, "If  
some knight  
seek to marry  
our daughter,  
shall she not  
love him?"

**T**Henne I answerde, "Lady, ye be moche hard & euyl, in as moche that ye wyll not suffre that your daughters be amerouse; and yf so came that somme gentyl knyght, worshipful, myghty, and puyssaunt ynough after theyre degre, had sette his herte on one of them, and be wyllynge to loue her, and take her to his wyf, why shalle she not loue hym?" "Syre," sayd his wyf, "To this I shalle ansuere you, it is so as to me semeth, that euery woman, mayde, or wydowe, may wel bete her self with her owne staf; for al men ben not of one condycion, ne of one manere, for that thynges, whiche pleseth

to one is dyspleasyng to the other. And somme ben, the whiche taken grete playsyre of the grete chere and semblaunt that is done to them, and that thynken but good and honeste. And som also ben therfore more curyous to demaunde and aske theyr peramours to be theyre wyues. But many other ben, whiche are not of suche manere, but all contrarye; for whanne they see that theyr peramours paynen them self to make them chere, they preyse them lesse, and within theyr hertes ben doubtyng of them, and, as they see them so lyght of wyll and so enamowred, they leue them, and demaunde them not for to be theyr wyues. And thus many one, for to shewe them self to moche amorous, and for to be to moche open in beholdyng and in gyuyng fayre semblaunt, lese theyre maryage. For, in certayne, they that kepe them symply, and the whiche gyuen noo fayre token or semblaunt to one nomore than to other, ben most preysed, and they be therfore the sooner wedded. Wherupon ye told me ones an ensample whiche I haue not forgeten, which \*happed to yow of a lady to whome I gyue no name, the whiche ye wente ones to see her, wyllinge to take her in maryage. She, that wyst and knewe well how it was spoken of yow & her for her maryage, maade to yow as grete chere as she hadde loued and knowen your personne all the dayes of her lyf. Ye prayd her of loue; but by cause that she whiche was not wyse ynough to ansuere yow curtoysly and wel, ye demaunded her not; and yf she had hold her self more secrete and couered, and more symply, ye had take her to your wyf. Of whome I haue syn herd saye that she hath be blamed, but I wote not for certayne yf it was so. And certaynly, syre, ye be not the fyrst to whome suche aduenture is happed; for many wymmen haue lost theyr maryage by cause of theyr amorous loke and fayr semblaunt. Therefore it is good to euery woman vnwedded for to behaue her symply and clenely, and specially before them of whome is spoken for her maryage. I saye not but that men must bere honoure to euery one after that they be."

Some men ask their paramours to be their wives, but some do not.

\* [Caxton, I. vii.]

The knight once went to a lady whom he was to marry, but was displeased with her freedom.

**How men ought to loue after his estate and degre.****Capitulo C.xxvj.**

No woman  
should set  
her love on a  
man of lower  
degree,

**W**Hat saye yow, lady, wold ye haue kept them so straitly that they shold not take somme plesaunce more to somme than to the other?" "Syre, I wyll not that they haue or take any plesaunce of them that ben of lower estate or degrez than they be of; that is to wete, that no woman vn-wedded shalle not sette her loue vpon no man of lower or lasse degree than she is of. For yf she tooke hym, her parentes and frendes shold hold her lassed and hyndered. These whiche louen suche folke, done ageynste theyre worship and honoure. For men ought to desyre ne coueyte nothyng so moche in this world as worship and the frendship of the world, and of hir frendes, the whiche is lost as soone as she draweth oute her self oute of the gouernement and fro the counceyll of them. As I myght telle, yf I wold an ensample, of many whiche therfore ben dyffamed and hated of theyr parents and frendes.

\*[Caxton,  
I. vii. b.]

nor yet of  
higher estate.

\* "And therfore, syre, as I theyr moder charge and deffende them that they take no playsaunce ne that in no wyse sette theyr loue to none of lower degree than they be come of, ne also to none of hyhe estate, whiche they may not haue to their lord. For the grete lordes shalle not take them to theyr wyues; but alle theyr louynge loke and semblaunt they do it for to deceyue them, and for to haue the delytes and playsaunce of theyr bodyes, and for to brynge them into the folye of the world.

**How wedded wymmen, whiche haue sette theyr loue to some of lower degree than they be of, are not worthy to be callyd wymmen. Capitulo C.xxvij.**

Women that  
set their love  
on wedded  
men, priests,  
and seruantes,

**A**Lso, they whiche putte and sette theyr loue on thre maner of folke, that is to wete, wedded men, prestes, and monkes, and as to seruantes and folke of noughte, these maner of

wymmen whiche take to theyr peramours and loue suche folke, I hold them of none extyme ne valewe, but that they be more gretter harlottes than they that ben dayly at the bordell. For many wymmen of the world done that synne of lechery but only for nede and pouerte, or els by cause they haue ben deceyued of hit by false counceylle of bawdes. But alle gentylle women whiche haue ynough to lyue on, the whiche make theyre peramours or louers suche maner of folke as before is sayd, it is by the grete ease wherin they be, and by the brennyng lecherye of theyr bodyes. For they knowe wel that, after the lawe of theyr maryage, they may not haue for theyr lordes, ne to be theyr husbondes, men of the chirche ne other of no valewe. This loue is not for to recouere any worship, but alle dishonour and shame."

are more evil  
than harlots,  
that sin for  
poverty.

**How it is almesse to enhaunce a man into a grete valour.**

Capitulo C.xxviij.

"**A**T the leste, syth ye wylle not graunte ne accorde that youre doughters loue no man peramours as longe as they shalle be vnwedded, please it yow to suffre that whanne they shall be wedded, they may take somme plesaunce of loue, for to hold and behaue them self the more gaye and ioiefull, and for the better knowe theyr behauynge and maner emonge folke of worship. And, as before this time I haue sayd to yow, it were to them grete welthe and worship to make a man of none extyme ne of valewe to become of grete valour."

[Caxton,  
I. viii.]

**The answer of the lady of the Towre. Capitulo C.xxix.**

"**S**Ire, to thys I ansuere yow, I wylle well and am content that they make good chere to all worshipfulle men, and more to somme than to the other, that is to wete, to them of gretter name and more gentyl, or els better men of theyr persones, and after that they bere to them worship and honour, and that they synge and daunce before them honour-

Women  
should make  
cheer to all  
worshipful  
men accord-  
ing to their  
degree;

but only to  
give to men  
such love as  
will make  
them better  
and more  
honourable.

No amorous  
woman can  
pray deu-  
voutly,  
\* [Caxton,  
I. viii. b.]

nor love her  
lord duly.

ably. But as for to loue peramours sythe they shall be wedded, withoute it be of suche loue as me ought to bere vnto folke of worshippe, for to loue and worshippe them after that they be worthy and of valour, and whiche haue had grete payne and trauaylle to gete and acquere glorye and worschyp by theyr valyaunce in armes, these must be loued, doubted, serued, and honoured, withoute hauynge in them ony plesaunce, sauf only for the bounte of them. But to saye and hold hit good, that a wedded woman shold loue and haue a peramour, ne take the othe and feythe of none, to thende that they be theyr louers and peramours, ne also to gyue their feith and othe to none, I trowe and wene certaynly that no lady ne damoyseil wedded, no woman of other estate, shall not put her estate and worship in this balaunce for many reasons; the whiche I shalle declare vnto you. Wherof the fyrst is as before I told yow, that none woman amorous shalle neuer be soo deuoute in her prayers, ne to here the seruyse of God, as she \* was before. For oute of loue spryngen and comen to many thoughtes, and melancolye, as men sayn; and many one ben so enamoured and enflammed of loue that, yf they herd ryng the last peel of a masse, and that they knewe that theyr peramoure wold haue come to see them, they shold lese the masse for to please to theyr peramoure. This is no game egaly parted. But suche is the temptacion of Venus, the goddessse of lecherye. The other reason I doo compare to the mercer, whiche weyeth his sylke whiche is fyn and lyght, but yet he maye put so moche of it into the balaunce that it shalle ouerbere the weyght whiche is at the other syde of the balaunce; that is to saye, that the woman may be soo moche enamoured, that lasse she shalle loue her lord therfore, and that the loue, worship, and cheuaunce whiche he shold haue she shalle take fro hym, and gyue it to other. And for certayne a woman may not haue two hertes, no more than a greyhound may renne after two bestes. Therfore impossyble is that she myght loue her peramour of trewe loue and her lord also withoute faute or deceyuaunce. But God and reson naturell con-

strayneth her. For, as the clerkes say and the predycatours, God beganne the world by maryage of man and woman ; and God hym self, whanne he came in to this world, he spake and treated at a sermon that he made of maryage, sayeng that maryage is a sacrament ioyned and annexed of God to the man and the woman, & how they be but one body, and that they oughte to loue eche other more than fader ne moder ne other creature. And therefore, syth that God hath assembled them, ne man mortal ouȝt not to separe them, ne take fro them the loue whiche is bytwene them. This sayd God of his owne mouthe. And therfore at the dore where as the preest maketh them to swere that they shalle loue and kepe eche other bothe seke and hole, and that they shalle not gwerpysshe or leue eche other for none other better or worse, and therfor I saye, syth the creatour of al the creatures sayd so, it is but one thyng and one body, that men ought to gwerpysshe and leue al other worldly loue for to take the loue whiche oughte to be in maryage, how thenne shold the wedded woman gyue her loue ne do any oth to some other, withoute consent of her lord ? I trowe that, after \* the wyll of God and the commaundementes of holy chirche, that this may not dewely be done withoute feythe be broken of one syde or of [o]ther, and many horryble dedes done. For in good feythe I doubte not but that they whiche ben amorous and gyuen theyr feythe to other men, louen but lytel or nought theyre husbondes, and that they be cursed of God.

God began  
the world by  
marriage,

and men and  
women swear  
in church to  
love each  
other ;

how then can  
a woman give  
her love to  
another ?

\* [Caxton,  
m. i.]

**How a woman whiche wille kepe her honour must doo ne shewe no maner of semblaunt to none. Capitulo C xxx.**

“**T**Here ben yet other reasons for to kepe the loue of her lord clenely, withoute daunger or parylle, that is to wete, ageynst enuyous folke that haue euylle and cursed tongues, whiche maken the fals reportes ; that is to saye, that yf any woman maketh somme semblaunt of loue to some man, and yf that somme other her seruaunt or any other body perceyueth it, as they shalle be departed fro her, they anone shalle

If a woman  
love a man,  
and her  
servant or  
another see  
it,



it will be  
talked of, and  
she will be  
blamed,

and lose her  
husband's  
love.

Of many  
ladies who  
died without  
confession,

\* [Caxton,  
m. i. b.]

and for one  
joy they had  
they suffer  
now a  
hundred  
griefs.

talke and speke therof before the folke; and thus shal the wordes soo ferre goo, that at the laste men shalle saye that she fawted in dede, and by this maner is a good & trewe woman blamed and dishonoured. And yf hit befall that by somme aduenture her lord haue ony knowlechyng of hit, he shalle take her in hate, and of hertely loue he shalle neuer loue her, and euer he shalle saye euylle of her. And thus is the trewe loue of maryage lost and go fro them, and neuer parfyght ioye ne loue shalle they haue togyder. And therfore grete parylle is to euery wedded woman to put her lord and his estate, & and the welthe & ioye of her maryage, in this balaunce & in suche peryllous auenture. Wherfor I counceyll not to no good woman to haue ony peramour, ne to be ameraus, in so moch that she be subget to other than to her lord; for by suche a cause many good maryages haue ben left & forgotten, & for one word that is come therof, an .C. euyls ben comen therfor. I shal telle yow therof one example of them whiche ben dede, & haue fynysshed theyr lyues by the peryls whiche ben in folysshe loue. The lady of Coussy & her peramoure deide therof, & also dyd the castellayne of the Verger, and after her the duchesse, \* and also many other deyde therof, only for the loue, and the most parte withoute confessyon or shryfte, wherfore I wote not how they doo in the other world. But I doubte not but that the delytes and playsaunces whiche they tooke therof in this world shalle be to them derely sold. And the delytes of them that ben ameraus ben suche, that for one ioye that they receyue of hit, they suffre and haue therfore an .C. dolours, and for one worship honderd shames. And euer I haue herd saye, that a woman ameraus shalle neuer after loue her lord with good herte, but that she shalle euer be in melancolye and in smalle thoughtes."

How a knyght loued the lady of the Towre. Ca. C xxxj.

"**L**Ady, ye make me to be merueylled how that ye so sore discounceylle them to loue. Wene ye to doo me to

byleue that ye be so trewe in your spekyng, that ye neuer were amorous? Certaynly I haue wel herd the complaynte of some, of whom eye hold wel your pees." "Syre," sayd the lady, "I trowe that ye wold not byleue me yf I told to you the very trouthe therof; but as for to saye I haue ben prayd of loue, I haue many tymes perceyued how somme men were aboute to speke to me therof, but euer I brake theyr wordes, & called to me somme other, wherby I dyd breke theyr faytte. Wherof ones hit befelle, as many knyghtes and ladyes were playenge with me, that a knyght sayd to me how that he loue all the ladyes that ben in this world. And I dyd demaunde and asked hym yf hit was long syn that sekenes & euylle had taken him. And he ansuerd that it was wel .ij. yere gone and past, and that neuer he durst telle it to me. I thenne ansuerd to hym that it was nothyng of that space of tyme, and that he hasted hym to moche, and that it was but a temptacion, & that he shold goo to the chirche for to cast vpon hym holy water, and that he shold saye his Aue maria, & that his temptacion shold sone after go fro hym, for the loue was newe. And he demaunded of me why. And thenne I sayd to hym that none peramoure or louer ought not to saye to his lady that he loueth her, \*tyll the tyme of seuen yere and an half be passyd & gone, and that it was but a lytell temptacion. Thenne he wende to haue argued, and put many reasons vnto me, whanne I sayd al on hyghe: Behold ye all what sayth this knyght, whiche is but two yere syn he loued fyrst one lady! And thenne he prayd that I shold kepe my pees therof, and that in good feythe he shold neuer speke to me therof; but at the last he sayd to me, Lady of the Towre, ye be moche euylle and straunge, and also after your wordes ouer prowde in loue, I doubte that ye haue not be euer so straunge; ye be lyke the lady of the fucille, whiche said to me thus, that she wold neuer here ne vnderstand the noote and wordes of none, sauf one tyme that a knyghte prayd her, but she had an vnclie whiche she made to hyde hym self behynd her, for to here and vnderstande what that the knyght shold seye; wherin she dyd

The lady tells  
the knight

that a knight  
talked to her  
of love;

but she told  
him to wait  
seven years,

\* [Caxton,  
m. ii.]

and he re-  
plied she was  
evil and  
strange.

grete treason. For he wende wel secretely to saye his rayson, and wend not that ony one had herd hym, but her self alone. Wherefore I dare almost say that bothe yow and she be but grete spekers, and lytell pyteous of them that requyre mercy and grace; and she is of your oppynyon, that no ladyes or damoysels may not disporte them with none other than with theyr lord, for the reasons which ye haue sayd before." "But, syre," sayd thenne the lady of the Tour to her lord, "as for your daughters, ye may saye to them and charge them of that what shalle befall yow, but after the faytte or dede ryght shall be done. Syre, I pray to God that to worship and honour they may come, as I desyre. For myn entencion and wyll is not to ordeyne vpon none ladyes ne damoysels, but yf hit be vpon myn owne daughters, of whome I haue the chastysement and charge. For euery good lady or damoyselle, yf God be pleased, shalle gouerne and kepe hem self well to theyr worship and honour, withoute I, that am of lytell wytte and lytell knowynge, entremete me therof."

The Lady of the Tower prays that her daughters may come to worship and honour.

Yet speketh the knyght of the Towre. Capitulo Cxxxij.

\* [Caxton, m. ii. b.]

"**A**T the lest, my lady, I wylle yet argue to yow sayeng that, yf she may seme to come vnto worship and valour, the whiche had neuer, ne also shold haue courage ne hardynes to put hym self in payn to haue hit, but it were for the loue and playsyr of his lady, and by good trust to be a good knyght, and renommed amonge the valyaunt and hardy, for to gete worship and the grace of his peramour. And for a lytell chere, a man comynge of lowe degree may be enhaunced by his loue, and be compted amonge the worthy and valyaunt."

Yet the knight said that love raised men of low degree.

How one must be wyly and subtyll for to discouere his loue. Capitulo Cxxxij.

The Lady of the Tower replied, that

"**S**Ire, hit semeth me that there be many maners of loue, and, as men saye, the one is better than the other. For yf hit

be so that a knyght or squyer loueth somme lady or damoysselle by worshyp and honoure only, and for to kepe her worship and the curtosye of her, and for the good that she shalle do to hym, suche loue is good whiche is wythout prayer or request."

knights love  
for worship  
and honour  
only.

"What, lady, yf he requyreth her to kysse or embrace hym, it is no force, the wyndes blowen it away!" "Ha, a! syre, I answeere vnto yow, that as wel to my daughters as to other that me semeth; and therto I consente that they maye make to them good chere, and that they kysse them before all, to thende that they lose not theyr valour. But, as for my daughters whiche ben here present, I defende and withsaye to them the kyssyng, and alle suche maners of disportes. For the wyse lady Rebecca, whiche was right gentylle and noble, sayth, the kyssynge is nyghe parente and cosyn vnto the fowle faytte or dede. And Sybylle sayth, that the fyrst signe or token of loue is the loke or beholdyng, and after the amorous loke they come to the kyssynge, and thenne the dede or faytte; the whiche dede taketh away the loue & worship of God & of the world, & thus they come from one dede to another. & I lete you know that me semeth that, assone as they suffre them to be kyssed, they \*put them self in the subiection of the deuyll, whiche is to subtyll. For suche one weneth wel at the begynnynge to kepe hym fermely and be stronge, the whiche he deceyueth by his subtyll arte and crafte, and by suche kyssynges. And thus as one kyssynge draweth to hym another, and as the fyre kyndelet a strawe, and fro that strawe it cometh and kyndelet another, and thus atte last the bedde is a fyre & the hows also; in lyke wyse is it of suche loue. And yet I charge yow, my fayre daughters, that ye be no players. For suche playeng causeth oftyme many a folysshe loke and beholdynge, by the whiche may perauentur come blame and euylle renomme. I herd ones reherce and saye a tale of the duchesse of Bauyere, how that she had wel twenty subgettes, as men sayd, the whiche loued her, and to eche of them she graf signe and token of loue. She playd with them at the tables, and wan of them coursers, and hakneys, and dere

The lady  
replies

that kissing is  
parent and  
cousin to foul  
deeds.

\* [Caxton,  
m. iii.]

As one straw  
setteth a  
house on fire,  
so love  
kindleth evil.

The duchess  
of Bavaria

took gifts  
from many  
who loved  
her, but was  
defamed at  
last.

Many a  
woman is led  
to evil by  
covetousness.

and ryche furrynges, and also rynges and precious stones, and many other iewels, and grete prouffyte she had by them. But, for certayne, she coude neuer kepe her self so wel, but that at the last she was blamed and dyffamed; and better it had be for her worshyp, that she had bought and payed alle that she had of them half derer more than it was worthe. Therefore grete perylle is to euery lady or damoyseil, and to all other good and worshipfull wymmen, to vse suche playenge and be of suche lyf. For the most appertyse and wyse fynd them self at the last by suche delynge mocked and blamed and fowle dyffamed. And therefore, my fayre daughters, take ye here good ensample, and be ye not to curyous to ony playe for to wyne suche ouches or fermaylles; for by the couetousnes to gete and haue suche iewels for nought, many a woman put her self in subiection; and oftyme it befalleth therfor that they be deceyued. And thus is it good to aduyse and beware hym self before the comynge of the stroke."

#### How the holy lady approued the heremyte. Ca. C xxxiv.

\* [Carton,  
m. iii. b.]

Fayr daughters, I wylle telle yow one of the last ensamples of this book. It is of a full good lady whiche is moche to be preysed. And this ensample is reherced in the booke of Vitas Patrum, how the wyf of the prouost of Aquylee approued an holy heremyte by his bounte.

A holy  
hermit lived  
twenty-five  
years on  
bread and  
herbs,

and in a  
vision was  
told to go to  
Aquileia,

Ther was thenne an holy heremyte in an heremytage, the whiche had ben there by the space of .xxv. yere, where as he ete but breed and herbes and rotes, and ofte he fasted, and was of good and holy lyuyng. This good and holy heremyte beganne ones vpon a tyme to saye, "A good lord my creatour and my maker, yf ageynst the I haue ony thyng mysprysed, I demaunde and crye to the mercy; and yf I haue this .xxv. yere done ony good dwellyng styлле in this heremytage, what meryte shalle I haue therfore?" A vysyon came sone to hym, by the whiche hym thought that he sawe oure Lord, whiche sayd to hym, "Thow shalt haue the meryte of the prouost of

Acquyllee and of his wyf." And thenne, whanne he hed sene this vysyon, he sayd that he shold neuer reste tylle he come into Acquyllee for to enquire of the lyf and condycions of the prouost and of his wyf. He wente thyder, and, as God wold, thurgh the grace of the holy ghoost, the prouost and his wyf knewe wel the comynge of this heremyte, and the cause also why he came thyder. It befelle thenne, as the heremyte was nyghe by the towne, he sawe the prouost, whiche yssued oute of hit with a grete companye of men, and wente to make iustyse of a squyer, whiche had slayne another squyer; and was the prouost rydyng vpon a fayr courser, and had on hym a fayre gowne of sylke richely furred, and all his men that were aboute hym wel clothed & arayed. And as sone as the prouoste sawe the heremyte, he knewe hym, as the wyll of God was, and callyd hym, and sayd, "Good and trewe man, goo ye home to my wyf, and take her this rynge, and telle her that she doo to yow as she wold doo to me." The heremyte demaunded of hym what he was. And he answerd to hym that he was the prouost of Acquyllee. The Heremyte thenne, that sawe hym in suche estate and soo rychely clothed, was abasshed, and ryght sore merueylled, that he \* was so coyntely arayed, and that he wente for to make a man to be hanged; he wyst not what he shold thynke or saye, and was al troubled and abasshed, and hym thought that he had nothyng deserued of God. But neuertheles he wente to the prouostes place, and founde there the lady his wyf, to whome he toke the rynge, and said vnto her that her lord sent hym thyder, and that she shold doo to hym as she wold doo to hym self. The good lady receyued hym, and made the table to be couerd, & prayd hym to sytte before her. She made hym to be serued of grete plente of good and delycate metes, and of good wyne. And the heremyte, whiche was not wont to haue before hym suche metes, neuertheles he ete and dranke there, and sawe how the good lady toke the good metes that were put before her, and how she brake and dressed the good capons and other metes, and thenne she dyd put it al togyder in a

where the  
provost sent  
him to his  
wife,

\* [Caxton,  
m. iiii.]

who received  
him with  
honour,

and made  
him lie in her  
lord's bed.

And he was  
heated with  
wine,

so that when  
the lady  
came to bed  
to him, he  
would have  
embraced  
her, but she  
bade him  
wash in a tub  
of cold water;

\* [Caxton,  
m. iii. b.]

and this he  
did the  
second time,

grete dysshe, and sente it to the poure folke, and toke only for her refection brede and water; and thus she dyd euery day bothe at souper and at dyner. And as the euen came, she bad the heremyte into her chambre, whiche was richely hanged with cloth of sylke, and nobly dressed and arayed, and sayd to hym, "Good and trewe man, ye shall lye in the bedde of my lord and in his chambre." The heremyte wold haue refused it, but the lady sayd that she wold do the comaundement of her lord, and that for certayne he shold lye there. There she made to be brought to hym good spyces, and stronge and good wynes, wherto the good heremyte tooke soo good a sauoure that he ete and dranke soo moche, that he was dronke and ful ioyous in his spekyng; for the good wyn had soone ouercomen hym, by cause he was not wonte to drynke of hit. He wente to bedde, and the lady vndyd her clothes, and leyde her self by hym, and beganne to embrace and taste hym; and the heremyte, that moche hadde taken of metes and drynkes, awaked, and his flesshe beganne sore to be meuyd, and wold haue accomplysshed the faytte or dede of fornycacion with the lady. Thenne sayd she to hym, "Swete frende, whanne my lord wyl haue to doo with me of suche thyng, he goeth fyrste to bathe, and wassheth hym selfe in that tubbe, whiche ye see yonder full of water, for to be the more \*clene and fayre." And theremyte, whiche thoughte of nothyng than to fulfille and accomplysshe his wyll, sterte in the tubbe full of water, and bathed and wasshed hym in the water, whiche was cold as ony yse, and anone he was as half dede of cold. Thenne the lady called hym to her; and he came alle shakyng, for his hete was gone, and also his euylle wyll. And the lady embraced hym ageyne so moche that he gate hete, and was so chauffed, that he wold haue done his folysshe delyte; and as she sawe hym soo chauffed and so brennyng in that fowle delyte of lecherye, she prayd hym that he wold, for the loue of her, goo and wasshe hym ageyne in the tubbe, for to be the clener; and he, that yet had not slepte and was full of myghty and stronge wynes, as a man oute of his wytte, rose vp oute of the bedde,

and wente and bathed hym ageyn into the tubbe, and anone the cold water made hym feble & hard for cold. Thenne the lady called hym to her ageyne; and shakynge he came to her, as he dyd before; his teeth shoke and bete eche other for cold, and alle his grete hete was passed and gone. The lady roose vp, and couered hym well with warme clothes, and lefte hym alone, to thende he shold take his reste. And soone after, as he was a lytyll warme, he fylle into a slepe, for his hede was ryght pesaunt and heuy, and he awoke not tylle the morowe was come. To his rysynge cam an old preest or chappellayne, whiche demaunded hym how he dede; and whanne he perceyued that he laye in so fayr a bedde, and that he was so taken and surprysed, he was full of shame, and moche merueylled how in that dronkeship and folysshe wylle he was falle. He thenne sawe wel that they were of gretter meryte than he was, and demaunded of the chappellayne of the lyf and gouernaunce of the prouost and of his wyf; and he told hym that the most parte of the dayes of the yere they wered the hayre, and that the good metes whiche were brought at the table before them they sente to poure folke, and ete black brede and metes of lytyll sauoure, and dranke but water; and how they fasted the most parte of the weke. He after demaunded of hym why that tubbe full of cold water was sette by theyr bedde; and he answerd that it was put there for to kepe them fro the brennyng wylle of \*lecherye, for as soone as she or he is chauffed and their flesshe mouyng to that fowle delyte, they ryse out of the bed, & wasshe and bathe them self in this tubbe, whiche is ful of water, excepte one daye of the weke. Thenne as theremyte had this examyned the old chappellayne vpon the faytte of the prouost and of the lady his wyf, and that he was wel certayne how they ledde theyr lyf, he thought that the prouost, how be it that he were nobly and rychely arayed withoute and to the sight of the folke, whiche secretely vnknowynge to no man bare and had on his flesshe the hayre, and made good iustyce and the execucion of the mysdoers to be done and executed bifore hym,

and then fell asleep.

In the morning he was ashamed, and asked about the provost and his wife.

\* [Caxton, m. v.]



And thinking  
of the past  
night, he was  
ashamed and  
cursed  
himself,

and repented  
of his folly.

was worthy to haue and also his wyf seuen tymes more meryte. For he remembryd hym of the fowle dede whiche he wold haue commysed or done with the good lady, and how she essayed, wherof he was moche vergoynous and shamefull, and within his herte he cursed hym self that euer he departed oute of his heremytage, and that in trouthe he was not worthy to pulle of theyr shone and hosen fro theyr legges, wherfore fro thens he departed shameful and wepyng, sayenge with a hyghe voys, "Fayre God and good lord, I knowe no gretter tresour more noble ne more precious than is the good lady whiche hath essayed me, sene my folly, and approued my fallace and decepcion; and veryly she is wel worthy to be called and named the precious margaryte, as ye sayd in the Euangely." Thus spake the holy heremyte in hym self allone, and repented hym of his mysdede, and humbly cryed to God mercy, praysynge the good lady of her good lyf. Therfore a woman is to be preysed whanne she essayeth her self, and that she can resiste ageynst the temptacions of the deuyll, and ageynst the feblenes of her mortal flesshe, the folysshe wyll of her fowle delyte. And thenne as that fowle and dampnable delyte is by them accomplysshed and done, they repente them of it, but it is to late; for the deuyll, as he hath purchaced and brought them therto, he holdeth them in his subiection, and for his seruauntes, and assembled and bynde them togyder, in suche wyse that with grete payne they may be vnbound.

[Caxton,  
m. v. b.]

How the deuylle tempteth many one of the synne  
where as he fyndeth them most wyllynge and redy to.

Capitulo C xxxv.

A great lady  
was a widow,  
with one  
married  
daughter,

AN ensample I shalle reherce vnto yow of a grete lady, whiche was lady to a baron. This lady was longe tyme in thestate of wedowhede, and had but a daughter, whiche was wedded to a grete lord. She thenne became seke, and

laye in her dedely bedde, and made the cheste where as her tresoure was in to be sealed, and the keye to be brought vnto her, whiche she put in a linnen clothe vnder her bak. The dethe ranne fast vpon her, and she, whiche had euer thougt to her tresour, lyfte vp her hand makynge signe or token that none shold approche ne come to her back. And thus she dyd styll, tylle that she deyde and rendryd her sowle oute of her body. Thenne came the doughter, whiche was a grete lady, and demaunded of them that were at her deth yf she had ony tresour. They ansuerd that they knewe of none, but thought that she had some, and that yf she had ony, it was hyd somwher aboute her bedde. They told to her the maner of her moder, and how she wold not suffre that ony body shold come by her, and also how she maade a cheste to be sealed, and the keye of hit brought to her, whiche keye she keppe euer vnder her back. The corps was meued and tourned, and the keye found; and thenne her doughter wente into a towre where as the chyste was, and opened hit; wherin she fond, as wel in coyne as in plate, more than thyrty thousand pound; but the gold was found in cloutis and ballys of threde and of wulle, and in other thynges; wherof alle they that knewe and sawe the maner of it were merueylled and abasshed. The doughter thenne made a crosse, and sayd, that in good feythe she held her not so ryche by the .xxv. parte as she was, wherfore she merueylled moche and was sore abasshed. And yet she sayd how of late she and her lord also cam to her, and prayd her to helpe and lene to them some of her good tyll a certayne tyme that they shold rendre it and paye it her ageyne, and that she sware & made grete othes to them that she had no money, ne no syluer, but suche plate as they sawe abroad, that was a coup and a \*pyece only; and therfore was she moche merueylled to fynd there so grete a tresour. Thenne sayd the folke whiche were with her, "Madame, be not ye merueylled, for we ben therof more merueylled than yow; for yf she wold send on a message, or els as she had som other thyng to do, she borrowed some money of oure ser-

and on her deathbed she hid the key of a chest in the bed,

in which her daughter found great wealth,

though she had pretended to be poor.

\* [Carton, m. vi.]

The daughter  
and her hus-  
band kept all  
this money,  
and said no  
prayers for  
their mother,  
nor made any  
tomb for her.

uauntes, & sayd that she had no money, by her feythe." The doughter tooke alle this good with her, and went her waye toward her lord, to whome she was welcome; and of all this tresour was neuer gyuen a halfpenny for the sowle of theyr moder, but soone they forgate her. For it is not yet longe tyme gone that I was where as she was buryed, and demaunded and asked of the monkes of the abbeye where she lay, and why she had no tombe on her, or some token of her. And they ansuerd to me that, syn she was entered there, no masse, ne no seruyse at all, ne none other good ther had be done for her. By this ensample may ye knowe how the deuyll is subtyll to tempte the folke of the synne where he seeth them most entatched, & soo fast he holdeth them in it, that they maye not leue it, withoute to be therof confessyd; and maketh them his seruauntes, as he dyd the forsayd lady. For he dyd soo moche that she was subgette and seruaunt to her gold, in suche wyse that she durst not take of hit to doo her ony good. And therefore, my fayre doughters, here is a good ensample that, yf it befelle that God of his grace sende yow ony grete good, that ye departe largely of hit to the poure folke, in the worship of God and for the loue of hym, and specially to youre poure parentes and neyghbours; and leue it not to be departed by the handes of youre heyres; as dyde this lady, for whome, after her dethe, was neuer masse ne none other good done for her, as ye haue herd before.

**The example of a good wydowe.** Capitulo C xxxvj.

Of a widow

\* [Caxton,  
m. vi. b.]  
who led a  
good life,

**A**Nother ensample I wylle telle yow contrarye to this. It is of a good lady, whiche longe tyme was in wydowhede. She was of a holy lyf, and moche humble & \* honourable, as she whiche euery yere kepte and held a feste vpon Crystemasse day of her neyghbours bothe ferre and nere, tyll her halle was ful of them. She serued and honoured eche one after his degree; and specially she bare grete reuerence to the good and trewe wymmen and to them whiche had deseruyd to be

worshipped. Also she was of suche customme, that yf she knewe ony poure gentyll woman that shold be wedded, she arayed her with her iewels. Also she wente to the obsequye of the poure gentyll wymmen, and gaf there torches, and all suche other lumynary as it neded therto. Her dayly ordenaunce was, that she rose erly ynough, and had euer freres, and two or thre chappellayns, whiche sayd matyns before her within her oratorye; and after she herd a hyhe masse and two lowe, and sayd her seruyse full deuoutely; and after this she wente and arayed her self, and walked in her gardyn or els aboute her place, sayenge her other deuotions & prayers. And as tyme was, she wente to dyner; and after dyner, yf she wyste and knewe ony seke folke or wymmen in theyr childbedde, she wente to see and vysyted them, and made to be brouzt to them of her best mete. And there as she myzt not go her self, she had a seruaunt propyce therfore, whiche rode vpon a lytell hors, and bare with hym grete plente of good mete and drynke for to gyue to the poure and seke folke there as they were. And after she had herd euensonge, she wente to her souper, yf she fasted not. And tymely she wente to bedde; and made her styward to come to her to wete what mete sholde be had the next daye, and lyued by good ordenaunce, and wold be purueyed byfore of alle suche thyng that was nedefull for her houshold. She made grete abstynence, and wered the hayre vpon the wednesday and vpon the fryday. And hou I knowe this, I shalle telle it to yow. This good lady dyed in a manoyr whiche she had in dowage, the whiche was apperteynyng to my lord my fader, and I and my susters, whiche were but yonge of age, cam to duelle there; and the bedde wheron this good lady deyde was broken in pyeces, & vnder the strawe was founde a hayr, whiche a damoyzell toke and sayd to vs that it was the hayr of her lady, and that she wered it two or thre dayes in the weke; and also told \*and reherced to vs her good condycions and her good lyf, and how she rose euery nyght thre tymes, and kneled doune to the ground by her bedde, and rendryd thankynges to God, and prayd for al Crysten sowles, and

She helped  
poor people  
at weddings  
and funerals,

and visited  
the sick,

observing  
also all the  
fasts of the  
church.

When she  
died it was  
found that  
she had worn

\* [Caxton,  
m. vii.]  
a hair-skin  
twice a week.

The lady was  
Cecile of  
Ballauyle ;

an example  
to all other  
women ;

of whom I  
recollect  
many things,  
though I was  
but young  
when she  
died.

how she dyd grete almes to the poures. This good lady, that wel is worthy to be named and preysed, had to name my lady Cecyle of Ballauyle. And yet I haue herd saye that her broder myghte spende yerely .xviij. M pound ; but, notwithstandinge that, she was the most humble and the most good and curtoys lady that euer I knewe or wyste in any countrey, and that lasse was enuyous, and neuer she wold here say any euyl of no body, but excused them, & prayd to God that they myzt amende them, and that none was that knewe what to hym shold happe. And thus she blamed them that spake euylle of other folk, and maade them abasshed of that she repreued them so as she dyd. And thus oughte to doo euery good woman, and euery good man, at the example of this good lady. And knowe ye that hit is a noble vertu not to be enuyous, and not to be ioyeful of the dommage or scathe of other. And, for certayn, this good lady sayd that they whiche auaunced them of the euylle and dommage of other, and that mooked theyr neyghbours and other, and that God shold punysse them or some of theyr nyghe frendes and parentes, wherof came to them grete shame. And that haue I sene ofte befall, as the good lady sayd ; for none oughte not to iuge ne reproche the dammage or euylle of other. Many suche fayre and prouffitable talkyng of this good lady is in my memorye, notwithstandinge the yong age whiche I was of whanne she deyde ; for I was not aboue ten yere old. She had a ryghte noble ende, and as I wene ryght agreable to God ; and, as men say communely, of honest and good lyf cometh euer a good ende.

The thre enseynementes or lernynge whiche Cathon gaf to his sone. Capitulo C xxxviij.

[Caxton,  
m. vii. b.]  
Cathon was  
a Roman  
philosopher,

**A** Nother ensample I will telle yow, of the wyse Cathon, by whos wysedome was all the cyte of Rome gouerned. He made & wrote many fayr auctorytees, the whiche yet as now make grete memore of hym. This Cathon had a sone, and as

he was in the bedde of his deth, he callyd his sone to hym, the whiche had to name Cathonet, and sayd to hym, "Fayre sone, I haue longe lyued in this world, whiche is moche hard to knowe, and moche merueyllous, and alwey shall wexe wors, as I trowe; wherfore I wold and desyre moche that your gouernement and maner of lyuyng shold be good, to the worship of yow and of all your frendes. I haue take therfore to yow by wrytyng many enseynementes, the whiche shalle prouffyte to you hereafter, yf ye therto wylle sette your herte and haue them in youre memorye. Neuertheles, I haue bethought in my self to telle and gyue yow other thre er I deye, wherfore I praye yow that euer ye wyll haue them in your memorye.

and at his  
death he  
called to him  
his son,

whom he  
advised;

The fyrste enseynement. Capitulo C xxxviij.

"THE fyrst enseynement of the thre is this, that ye take none offyce of your souerayne lord, yf so be that ye haue good ynough & good suffysaunte after as your estate oughte to haue, and nomore ye ought to aske of God; and therfore ye ought not put your self in subiection to lose your good by somme euyl word or by somme euyl reporte. For certaynly, my fayr sone, there be lordes of dyuerse condycions and maners. Somme ben hasty, and that lyghtely bileue; and somme haue other maners of condycion; and therfore men oughte to haue suffysaunce, and be doubtyng to put hym self, his estate, and worship, in parylle and in the daunger of folke whiche ben lyght of wylle. The second enseynement is, that ye respyte no man that hath deseruyd to deye, & specially yf he be custommed to doo euylle; for, yf ye soo dyde, ye shold be participant in al the euylle that he afterward \*shold doo as ryght were.

first: to  
hold no  
offyce of the  
king, if he  
had enough  
to live with-  
out it;

second: to  
spare no one  
justly con-  
demned to  
death;

\* [Caxton,  
m. viii.]

The thyrd enseynement. Capitulo [C] xxxix.

"THE thyrd enseynement is, that ye preue and essaye your wyf, to wete and knowe yf she shalle kepe secretly your

third: to  
prove if his  
wife could  
keep his  
secrets.

The son for  
awhile  
observed  
these  
precepts,

but after  
accepted an  
office of the  
king,

and also  
forgave a  
thief con-  
demned to  
death.

counceylle, whiche paraenture myght be cause of your dethe. For there ben somme whiche ben moche wyse, and that can wel kepe secretely what that someuer men sayen to them, and the whiche also gyue good counceylle and aduysement. And somme ben that can neuer kepe theyr tongue, but telle alle that is sayd to them, as well ageynste them, as for them." And thus the wyse Cathon gaf this thre enseynementes to his sone, as he laye seke at the poynt of his dethe. This trewe and wyse man Cathon deyde, and his sone abode on lyue, whiche was hold sage and wyse, in so moche that themperour of Rome toke hym his sone for to endoctryne and teche hym. And afterward he maade some lordes to speke to hym for to withold hym to gouerne and sette in good rewle the grete fayttes and materes of Rome, and promysed hym to haue therby grete auaylles and prouffytees; wherfor, and by the couetyse of these prouffytees, he consented to take thoffyce, and toke on hym the charge of it, and forgate thenseygnement and techynge of his fader. And after, whan he was stablysshed and receyued in his offyce, he rode on a daye thorough the hyghe strete with grete companye of folke whiche folowed hym, he sawe a thief whiche men conueyed to the galhows for to be hanged, whiche was moche yonge. Thenne sayd one to Cathon, whiche stood by hym, "Syre, bycause of the nouellyte of your offyce, ye may wel respyte and kepe this man fro dethe." And he, withoute enquest by hym made of the caas why he was iuged to receyue dethe, made hym to be vnbound, and, by cause of the nouellyte of his offyce, he kepte the thief fro dethe. He was to hasty; for at that tyme he thougt not on the commaundement that his fader had made vnto hym.

\* [Caxton,  
m. viii.b.]

\* How Cathon, after he had done ageynst the two commaundements, essayed the thyrd on his wyf.

Capitulo C xl.

In the night

AS the nyght was come, and that Cathon had slept his fyrst slepe, he had many vysyons vpon this matere, in so moche

that he remembryd how he had broken and done ageynst two of the commaundementes of his fader; and, seynge this, he thought that he wold not breke ne do ageynst the thyrd; wherfore he wente to his wyf, and sayd thus to her, "My good frende and my wyf, I wold telle yow a grete counceylle, whiche toucheth my persone, and myghte be the cause of my dethe, yf I wist that ye shold kepe it secretly." "Ha, a! my lord," sayd she, "on my feythe, I hadde leuer be dede than to discouere to ony body youre counceylle." "Ha, a! my frend, thenne shalle ye knowe hit," sayd he;—"trouth it is, that themperour toke to me his sone, as ye wel knowe, for to lerne and teche hym; but certaynly hit is not longe tyme gone, for somme wordes whiche he sayd to me, that I, as a dronken man and as he that was wrothe of other thyng, hastely toke the childe and slewe hym, and more I dyd, for I tooke and arrached oute of his bely his herte, the whiche I made to be confyte in sugre and other spyces, and sente it to themperour his fader and to his moder, and they ete hit; and thus I auenged me of hym, but I knowe wel now that it is an euyll and abhomynable dede done, wherof I me repente, but it is to late; therfore, my good frend and my wyf, I praye yow as affectuely as I can, that ye kepe this counceyll secrete withyn your herte, as I trust me to yow." But the morowe after she beganne to wepe and maake grete sorowe; and a woman whiche was with her demaunded of her, "Madame, what haue ye that ye make suche sorowe? haue ye ony heynesse wythin your herte?" "Veryly," sayd she thenne, "ye, my frend, and that a grete, but rather I shold deye, er it shold be knowen." "Ha, a! madame, she were wel oute of her wytte that shold telle and dyscouere suche a counceylle, yf ye had sayd hit; and as for me, rather I shold lete me drawe than I shold telle it ageyn." "Ye," sayd the wyf of Cathonet, "maye I truste in yow?" "Ye, by \* feyth," saith the other woman. She tooke her feythe and her othe, and thenne to her she told and discouered her secrete, how her lord had slayne themperours sone, and his herte confyted in spyces had sente to themperour his fader and to his moder, &

Cathonet remembered his father's advice, and told his wife he would tell her, as a secret,

that he had killed the emperor's son.

The wife told the story to her friend;

\* [Caxton, n. i.]



this woman  
told the  
empress what  
Cathonet's  
wife had told  
her,

and this she  
did out of  
envy to  
Cathonet.

The empress  
began to  
grieve, and  
told the  
emperor,

\* [Caxton,  
n. l. b.]  
who ordered  
Cathonet to  
be put to  
death.

how they had ete of hit. This woman maade a crosse, as she were sore merueyelled, and sayd that she shold kepe hit secretely. But certaynly her taryenge there, after that she knewe hit, thought her longe, for to haue go and telle it to other; for, as soone as she was departed fro Cathons hows, she wente forthwith where themperours wyf was, and came and kneled before her, and sayd, "Madame, to your good grace I wyll speke secretely of a grete counceylle." And thenne themperesse commaunded her ladyes to go aparte, and the sayd woman beganne thus to speke: "Madame, the grete loue whiche I bere vnto yow, and for the grete good that ye haue done to me, and as I truste that ye yet wyll doo, maketh me to come hyder for to telle yow a grete counceylle, the whiche I wold not telle but to youre persone; for I myght not suffre ne see your dishonour, for none erthely good. Madame, it is so that ye loue and haue dere Cathonet more than ony other, as it appyereth wel; for ye haue made hym governour of the cyte of Rome, and ye shewed hym gretter loue whanne ye gaf to hym the keypyng of your sone, to whome he hath hold such felauship that he hath slayne hym, and hath take his hert out of his bely, and wel dressyd and confyted in sugre and spycys, and hath made yow to ete it." "What saye ye?" sayd themperours wyf. "Madame," sayd she, "I telle yow trewe for certayn, for I knowe this by the mouthe of Cathonets wyf, whiche sorowful and wepyng told it to me in grete counceylle." And whanne themperesse herd her so speke, she with a hyghe voys beganne to crye, and made suche a sorowe that it was pyte to see, in soo moche that the tydynges came to themperour, how the emperesse made so grete sorowe. Themperour was sore abasshed, and came there as themperesse was, and demaunded of her why she maade suche sorowe; and she, with hyghe pleynt, ansuerd and reherced to hym al that the damoyzell had told her of theyr sone. And whan themperour wyst that they had eten \*the herte of theyr child, he bicame ryght angre and sorowfull, and commaunded that Cathonet shold forthwith be take and hanged in the myddes of Rome, there as the folke

myght loke on hym as vpon a fals murderer and traytour. His sergeaunts wente and toke hym anone, and told hym the commaundement of themperour, and that it was for his sone whiche he had slayne. Cathonet thenne sayd to them, "It is no nede that al that men sayn be trouthe; ye shalle put me in pryson, and shalle say that it is to late to make ony execucion of iustyse, and that to morowe I shalle be hanged before the peple." The sergeaunts loued hym moche, and soo dyd alle manere of folke; they dyd as he badde them to doo, and thenne wente and sayd to the emperoure and themperesse that hit were for the beste to make iustyse of hym on the morowe nexte comynge, and that hit was to late, and how more people shold thenne be gadered and assembled for to see hym. And the emperour, whiche made grete sorowe for his sone, graunted hit.

But the officers, for love of Cathonet, granted him till the next day.

And notwithstandynge this, in the meane whyle that Cathonet was conueyed to pryson, he callyd to hym a squyer of his, and seyde to hym, "Goo to suche a knyght that kepeth themperours sone, and telle hym how the emperour weneth that I haue put hym to dethe, and that he faylle not to be here to morowe with hym before the houre of pryme, or els I shalle be in grete perylle to receyue a shameful dethe." This squyer departed, and soo faste rode and waloped, that that nyght he came aboute one of the cloke after mydnyght there as Cathonet hadde take to kepe the sone of the emperoure, as to his trewe and good frende, whiche was a trewe man, and moche wyse, and merueyllously they loued eche other. The squyr beganne to calle wyth an hyghe voys, and dyd soo moche, that he came tofore the bedde there as the trewe and noble baron laye, and told hym how somme had done byleue to the emperour that Cathonet hadde slayne his sone, and how hit was ordeyned that he shold be on that next morowe hanged.

Cathonet meantime sent a squire to the lord that kept the emperor's son,

who was his friend.

And as the baron herd this, he was sore abasshed, & moche \* merueylled of this auenture; & forthwith he rose oute of his bedde, and made his men to be redy, and came to the bedde

And the baron arose  
\* [Caxton,  
n. ii.]

and went to  
the prince's  
bed, and  
told him  
about  
Cathonet.

where the sone of themperour laye, and told to hym the merueyll. And whanne the child vnderstood it, he had grete sorowe in his herte, for euermoche he loued Cathonet his maystre. Here I leue to speke of the baron, and of themperours sone, and tourne ageyne to speke of Cathonet, whiche was in pryson.

How they wold hange Cathonet. Capitulo C xlj.

Cathonet  
was much  
loved by the  
Romans,

who grieved  
as they saw  
him go to the  
gallows;

but the  
hangman  
could not be  
found,

and the man  
whom  
Cathonet had  
saved from  
death offered  
to hang him  
now.

\* [Caxton,  
n. ii.b.]

Cathonet was merueyllously loued in Rome of al maner of folke, as he that was wyse, humble, trewe, and curtoys, and whan the morow was come, he sayd to one his grete frend, that at all auenture he shold make the hangmen of the towne to hyde them self secretly somwher tyll it were about the houre of tierce; and he dyd as he had prayd hym to doo. Cathonet thenne aboute the houre of pryme was conueyed to the galhows of alle the peple of Rome, whiche made grete sorowe for hym, and yet gretter sorowe had they made, but they wened veryly that he had done the dede of whiche he was accused, wherof they had grete merueylle; and sayd emonge them "How may suche a wyse man haue be so sore tempted of the deuylle that he hath slayne themperours sone? how may this be?" Of this faytte was grete talkynge amonge them; somme byleued hit, and somme sayd it was not so. Neuertheles he was had to the galhows, and was asked after the hangman, but he coude not be found there; wherof hit befelle a grete merueylle, for he whiche Cathonet had respyted & saued fro dethe as men led hym to be hanged, came forth and sayd, "Lordes, the dede is fowle, dishonest, and vylaynous, and for the loue of themperour I offre my self to doo thoffyce, yf there be none other that wylle doo hit." Euery man loked thenne on hym & sayd, "Is not that he to whome Cathonet graunted his lyf whanne he was newe putte in thoffyce of gouernour?" "Certaynly," sayd the other, "hit is he & none other, withoute fawte." Wherfore in token and signe of a grete<sup>1</sup> merueyll, they blessyd \* them with theyr handes, sayeng.

<sup>1</sup> sic.

"He is wel a foole that saueth and respyteth ony theef fro the galhows!" Cathonet thenne loked on hym, and sayd, "Thou arte wel passyng redy; remembryst not thou the tyme passed? but thus gone the merueylles of the world." And as soone as he had sayd these wordes, there was a grete nombre of men al on horsback whiche made grete clamour and cryed, "Put not to dethe the trewe man Cathonet!"

Just then a  
great cry was  
heard,

**How themperours sone came to saue his mayster  
Cathonet, and of his escape. Capitulo C xliij.**

**A**Nd whan the people perceyued and sawe the horses rennyng toward them, and sawe anone the sone of themperour, whiche cryed, "Touche not neyther ley hond on my maysters body, for I am alyue!" they were gretely merueyllled. The child anone lyght of his hors, and wente and vnbonde his mayster, & sore wepyng kyssed hym ful tendirly & said, "Ha, a! my swete frend & maister, who hath this purchaced & so grete a lesyng fonde & contryued vpon you, the which my lord my fader hath so lyghtely byleued?" And thenne he embraced & kyssed hym ageyne; & al the people, whiche was gretely merueyllled, as they sawe the pyte & good nature of the child, thanked & mercyed God with al theyr hertes of the delyueraunce of Cathonet. The child made his mayster to be sette on horsbak, & ledde hym thurgh the stretes of Rome by the raynes of his brydell, tyll they came in to the palais where themperour his fader was. And whanne themperour and his wyf knewe for certayne the comynge of theyr sone, they wente and met hym with grete ioye; and as they sawe hym ledyng his mayster Cathonet by the raynes, they were gretely merueyllled, & held them ashamed and vergoynous toward Cathonet, and cam to hym, and eche of them kyssed hym, and made to hym the grettest ioye and chere and the grettest honoure that they couthe, and excused them toward hym of this dede. Thenne sayd the child to his fader themperour, "Ha! my lord, wylle ye vse of so hasty iustyce withoute makynge of

and the  
emperor's  
son came on  
horseback,

to save his  
master  
Cathonet;

and led him  
to the em-  
peror.

The prince  
asked his  
father to  
enquire who  
had accused  
Cathonet,

\* [Caxton,  
n. iii.]

but Cathonet  
told them all  
how his  
father had  
sent for him  
on his death-  
bed,

and advised  
him,

none enqueste vpon the dede or faytte? For a man of so hyghe estate as ye be shold & ouȝt to be more blamed therfore, than another of lower degre or estate. For ye hadde maade hym to be dampned and \*destroyed withoute cause, it had be grete pyte and grete dommage; and certaynly neuer after I shold haue had ioie in my herte. For yf I can ony good, it cometh of hym." Themperour ansuerd, "Fayr sone, hit was euylle done of vs, and in this we haue gretely offended and gete shame, but the loue that we haue in the, and the trust that we haue in thyn preferrement, toke reason fro vs, and bestourned our wytte." Thenne spake Cathonet and sayd to themperour, "Syre, merueylle yow not of this thyng; I shalle now telle vnto yow, why al this was sayd. My fader, whiche in his tyme was a ryght wyse man and a trewe, and borne in this land, shewed to me many good enseynementes, yf I had be so wyse to haue had them euer styлле in memorye; and yet as he was seke in his bedde, and nyghe at his last ende, he callyd me to hym, as he whiche moche desyred that I myght lerne and knowe som good, and prayd me that I wold wel kepe in my memorye thre enseynementes, emonge al other that he before that hadde taught to me, the whiche I wyll now recorde and declare them, to thende that they may be ensample in tyme to come to euery man, as to hym to whome they haue happed, and that done the contrarye.

How Cathonet told themperour of the lore of his  
fader, and of his escape. Capitulo C xliij.

first: not to  
take any  
office under  
the emperor;

"**T**He fyrst enseynement that he taught me was thys, that yf euer God gaf me chaunce and good ynough, that I shold thanke hym moche of hit, and haue in me suffysaunce, and not coueyte ne aske more of God, and by cause I shold haue suffysaunce, he commaunded and charged me that neuer I shold put my self in subiection of none offyce vnder my souerayne lord. For yf I dyd so by couetyse of more good, somme enuyous by somme fals repporte shold make me to

lese my good and my self also. And that hit was a peryllous thyng to serue any prynce or grete lord of lyght and hasty wylle; for many one ther ben whiche \*enquereth them not yf the repporte to them made is trewe or not, wherfor the commaundements of suche hasty lordes ben straunge and peryllous, as ye now haue sene how this ensample is to me, whiche almost hath be shamefulle & greuable. And yf I had byleuyd the counceyll of my fader, I had neuer falle in suche perylle. For thanked be God I had of erthely goodes ynough, and more than I haue deseruyd to God, and myght wel haue deported my self of takynge of thoffyce. The second enseynement was, that I neuer shold respyte ne saue to no man his lyf, whiche had deserued to deye, and in especiall a theef or an homycyde, whiche were custommed to theftes and murdre of folke; and that, yf I dyd, I shold euer be partener of alle suche euylle dedes that they myght doo afterward. And this commaundement I haue enfraigned and broken. For this dede haue I sene hym, whiche I haue respyted hym fro the shamefulle dethe, that offred and presented hym self for to be the hangman of my body, lytell reward he offred to me. The thyrd enseynement was that I shold essaye my wyf or euer I shold discouere to her any grete counceyll; for therin is to grete paryll. Neuertheles ther ben some that can wel kepe secretly what men saye to them, and in the whiche men fynd good counceyll and comforte; and other also whiche that can no thyng kepe in secrete. And thenne, as I me bethought how I had broken and done ageynst the .ij. enseynementes of my fader, I thought and sayd in my self that I shold preue and essaye the thyrd. Wherfore that other daye, as I was a bedde wyth my wyf, I awaked her, and, for to essaye her wylle, I sayd to her that I had slayne the sone of themperour, and that his herte confyted in spyeces I had made themperour and his wyf to ete hit, and that, for the loue of whiche she loued me, she shold kepe this in secrete, soo that none myght neuer knowe no thyng of hit. Now haue I proued and essayed how she hath kepte secretly my counceyll, as euery one maye now

\* [Caxton,  
n. iii. b.]

second: to  
give respite  
to no man  
that had  
deserved to  
die; and

third, to  
prove  
whether his  
wife could  
keep his  
counsel.

see and knowe. But I gyue me not to grete merueylle therof ; for hit is not of newe how that a woman can not kepe secretly that whiche men sayen to her in counceylle.

\* [Caxton,  
n. iii.]

\* **How Cathonet exposed his auenture, or hap.**

Capitulo [C] xliiij.

Then  
Cathonet  
gave up his  
office,

and the  
emperor  
gave him  
great gifts.

As the shaft  
from the bow,  
so the word  
from the  
mouth cannot  
be recalled.

“**N**OW haue ye herd how it is happed to me by cause I dyd not byleue the counceylle of my fader, whiche was so trewe and wyse a man. To me therfore is come almost a gret euylle.” And notwithstondynge thus sayd Cathonet to themperour, “Syre, I rendre and discharge me of your offyce, and from hensforth I shalle not be enpeched of hit.” And he therof was discharged with grete payne. Neuertheles he was receyued for to be mayster of the grete counceill of Rome, and in especiall of the grete fayttes and dedes ; and themperour made hym to haue grete prouffitees, and gaf hym grete yeftes, and loued hym aboue al other, and regned moche holyly in the loue of God and of the peple. And therfore, my fayre doughters, this is here a good ensample how ye ought to kepe the counceyll of your lord, and not telle it to no body, what someuer it be. For ofte comen therof many euyls, and for to be secrete, and specially in suche thyng that is deffended, may not come sauf only good. And in lyke wyse as the shafte is departed fro the bowe, must take her flyght and cours, and neuer cometh ageyne to the bowe tyll it haue smyte somme thyng, soo is the word whiche yssued oute of the mouthe lyke it, for after that he is put out of the mouth it may neuer be put in to the mouthe ageyne, but that it shal be herd, be it good or euylle. Werfor we ought wel to haue in our memorye the saynges and auctorytees of the wyse Salamon, whiche sayth that men must thynke on the wordes twyes or thryes or they be putt oute of the mouthe. And thus ought to doo al wyse folke ; for ouer many grete euyls haue ben done and engendered for to haue discouered the counceyll and suche thynges as haue ben sayd there in counceylle. Therfore I pray

yow, fayr doughters, that ye wylle haue this ensample in your memory, and neuer forgete it. For all good and worship may therof come to yow. And hit is a vertue the whiche escheweth grete hate and grete enuye, and many euyls also; for many one I knowe whiche haue loste moche of theyr goodes & suffred many grete euyls, for to haue spoke \*to lyghtely of other, and for to haue reported suche wordes as they herd saye, of the whiche they had nought to doo at al. For none soo wyse is that may knowe what to hym is to come. And full of naturel wytte be they whiche kepe them self fro recordynge of ony wordes; for he whiche wythsayeth them that blameth other as wel in ryght as in wronge, he doth but wel. And for to hold and kepe secretely the dommage and euylle of other, may com but good, as hit is reherced in the booke of my two sonnes, and also in an Euangely.

Many have  
lost goods,  
and suffered  
evil from  
speaking too  
lightly.

\* [Caxton,  
n. iiii.b.]

Here fynysshed the booke whiche the knyght of the Toure made to the enseynement and techyng of his doughters, translated oute of Frenssh into our maternall Englysshe tongue by me, William Caxton, whiche book was ended & fynysshed the fyrst day of Iuyn, the yere of oure lord .MCCCClxxxiiij. And enprynted at Westmynstre the last day of Ianyuer the fyrst yere of the regne of kynge Rychard the thyrd.

The  
Colophon.



## NOTES.

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P. 1. l. 5, *the nytingale*.—The translator is accountable for the name of the nightingale, which he has substituted for the *mesange* of the Knight of La Tour-Landry. The bird called in French a *mésange* is our titmouse, a bird more naturally associated with the thrustle and the thrush than the nightingale. But Caxton also translates it, *as the merle, the mavys, the thrustell, and the nyghtyngale*.

p. 2. l. 10, *the quene Proues of Hongrie*.—In the original it is *si comme faisoit la royne Prines, qui fu royne de Hongrie*. Who was the queen of Hungary here referred to as having written a book for the instruction of her daughters appears to be quite unknown. Legrand d'Aussy suggested that it was Elizabeth of Bosnia, daughter of Louis I, surnamed the Great, who had three daughters, the eldest of whom was affianced to Louis of France, comte of Valois, in 1374. M. Anatole de Montaiglon, the editor of the French original text of the Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry, objects to this explanation that it is inadmissible on account of the date, but I cannot quite understand the force of this objection, as the mother would probably have written the book for the instruction of her daughters long before the eldest was married. M. de Montaiglon suggests that it was Jeanne of Bohemia first wife of Jean king of France, who died in 1349, before her husband became king. It may be added that, in the French text, the name may be either *Prines*, or *Priues*, for *Prives*. Caxton translates it, *as dide a quene I suppose she was quene of Hongry*.

p. 3, l. 32, *in ryme*.—It is hardly necessary to state that at this period it was common to write books of instruction of this description in rhyme; and there is reason to believe that the author of the present book began writing it in rhyme. See my *Introduction*.

p. 7, l. 2, *was gone to hide her in a busshe*. The original says that she was gone into a garden; *en un jardin où elle estoit reposte et mucée pour la paour de lui; si estoit en un fort buisson et disoit vigilles des mors*. Caxton translates it, *where as this damoysele was entred into an hoole, where as she entrid, and rested there for drede of hym, and that was in a bushe*.

p. 8, l. 20, *she come into the wardrobe to ete browesse*.—In the French it is, *elle s'en venoit en la garderobe et là mengoit la soupe au matin ou aucune lescherie*. Caxton translates it, *she wente into the garderobe, and there ete a soupe or somme lycorous thyng*.

p. 8, l. 23, *rere sopers*.—At this time the rere-supper, or *arriere souper*, was quite a new fashion, and only indulged in generally by persons who were considered greedy and luxurious in their living and were not satisfied with the ordinary supper as their last meal in the day, or introduced on festive occasions when the socialities were continued late at night. There is a passage in the English translation of the *Manuel de Peché* by Robert of Brunne, relating to these rere-suppers and their abuse, which is curiously illustrative of our text. Here, also, the moralist is more especially severe against those who eat “rere sopers yn pryvyté;” for he tells us,—

“3yt are there outhere rere sopers  
Wyth men that serve knyghtys and squyers;  
For al the day than wyl they be  
Before here maysters yn soberté,  
But whan here maysters are broghte to bedde,  
Than wyl they fonde that they be fedde,  
And sytte up there wyth recolage,  
And 3yt do moche more outrage,  
To the mydnyght ys but a throwe,  
But hyt be tyl the cok krowe.”

*Robert of Brunne's Handlyng Synne*, p. 226, ed. Furnivall.

p. 9, l. 3, and .ij. of his men.—*Le clavier et deux varlez* in the original, which says nothing of the “other women,” except that it intimates that the lady had some of her chambermaids with her as well as the varlets, by the words which immediately follow, *un de ses varlez, qui tenoit rebrassée une des femmes de chambre*. The whole is a curious picture of medieval life.

p. 9, l. 18, *sette a colte*, etc.—In the original the saying appears as a rhyming couplet or proverb:—

“Mettez poulain en ambléure,  
Il la tendra tant comme il dure.”

p. 9, l. 34, *about prime*.—i. e. 6 o'clock A.M., according to our reckoning, which was at this period the ordinary hour of dinner, and supper was usually taken about 4 P.M.

p. 14, l. 19, *Ther was a lorde that y knew*.—The original text informs us that this lord was Messire de Craon, or, as one of the manuscripts reads, Messire Pierre de Craon. Pierre de Craon was a well-known baron of this time, lord of La Suse, Chantoce, Briolé, and

Ingrande; he died on the 15th of September, 1376. Caxton also has, *and this is my lord of Craon*.

p. 15, l. 11, *and the knight leuid that tolde her of the tailour*.—These words are not found in the French text, and their meaning is not very clear.

p. 16, l. 7, *had .iiij. faire doughtres*.—So it is in Caxton's translation. The French text says *four* daughters, as printed by M. de Montaiglon. And the English translation is evidently wrong and apparently imperfect lower down, where it represents the following words of the French; *Et la ije fille avoit à merveilles de plait et de parolles, et respondoit souvent et menu avant qu'elle peust tout entendre ce dont on luy parloit; la tierce n'estoit pas la plus belle à deviser, mais elle estoit bien la plus agréable, et si avoit la manière et le maintien seur et ferme, et paroloit assez pou et bien meurement, et son resgard estoit humble et ferme, plus que de nulle des iiij.* Yet the error may perhaps lie in the French text, as it now stands, which says nothing whatever of a fourth daughter. Caxton translates, *more ferme and humble than of that other two*.

p. 19, l. 3, *Amesse, the kinges doughter of Aragon*.—The name of the king's daughter, Amesse, does not occur in the French text, and it is probably a mere error of the English translator, who misread the words, *la fille aînée au roy d'Arragon*. Caxton translates it, *lyke as dyde the yonger doughter of Arragon*.

p. 22, l. 10, *Ther was a woman that had a pie in a cage*.—The well-known medieval story of the pie (or magpie) is found in several different forms, and in one form or other is often repeated by the medieval *conteurs*. In nearly the same form as told here, it is the subject of a much more modern story.

p. 23, l. 27, *She was a ladi of Fraunce*.—The original text adds that the lady was the dame de Languillier, and adds that her lord had full fifteen hundred pounds a-year, and not five hundred. Languillier is in Anjou. M. de Montaiglon reminds us that this same story is told in the thirty-seventh novel of the *Heptameron* of the queen of Navarre, without any names, but as having occurred in Anjou. Caxton has, *this good lady was lady of Languyller*.

p. 24, l. 12, *And so with her goodly wordes*.—The translator has here represented very imperfectly the words of the original, which are:—*“Et aucunes fois, par ces doulces parolles, le cuer lui en pitôit et s'en gardoit une grant pièce. Et ainsi toute sa vie, par grant obéissance et par grant courtoisie le vainquoit; car par autre voie jamais ne l'eust vaincu, et tant que au derrenier il s'en repentist et se chastia.”*

p. 24, l. 19, *worse, notwithstandinge*.—This should have been printed, *worse*. *Notwithstandinge*, as the latter word evidently begins a new paragraph.

p. 26, l. 15, *Hit happed onis*.—This story of the wager of the three husbands occurs, I am sure, elsewhere in medieval literature, but I cannot at present call to mind where.

p. 26, l. 16, *from a faiere*.—In the original it is, *venoient de l'empelette de guerre draps de Rouen*. Caxton has, *In a tyme it happed that marchauntes of Fraunce cam from certayn fayres, where as they sought draperye, and as they cam with marchaundyse fro Roan*.

p. 27, l. 17, *rere eggis*.—In the French *œufs molés*. Eggs that are underdone. *Rere eggs* are not unfrequently spoken of in the treatises on Diet and Health published in the sixteenth century. In the Promptorium we have "*Rere, or nesche, as eggys, mollis*."

p. 30, l. 1, *and an other lorde*.—According to the French original, this other lord was the *sire de Beaumanoir*, who is identified with Jean lord of Beaumanoir, maréchal of Britany, the same who fought with the thirty Bretons. His first wife, who is believed to be the one alluded to here, was Tiphaine de Chemillé (in Anjou); and his son, Jean lord of Beaumanoir, who died in 1385, married the daughter of Duguesclin. In Caxton it is, *and of the lord of Beaumont, fader of hym that is now lord*.

p. 30, l. 26, *the princesses and ladyes of Ingland*.—The original is, *la princesse et autres dames d'Angleterre*. The allusion is of course to the Princess of Wales, wife of the Black Prince. Our translator has, apparently from a feeling of patriotism, omitted a passage at the end of this speech, which stands in the original as follows:—*Et aussy par renommée l'on tient les dames de France et de cestes basse marches les meilleurs dames qui soient et les moins blasmées. Mais en Angleterre en a moult de blasmées, si comme l'on dist; si ne sçay se s'est à tort ou à droit*.

p. 31, l. 30, *for flies hidethe hem therinne*.—In the original it is, *les puces s'y mucent*.

p. 32, l. 9, *a knight that was a man wise of wordes*.—The original is, *et là fut le mareschal de Clermont, qui à merveilles avoit le siècle à main*; which is translated by Caxton, *ther was the marchal of Clermont, whiche merveiloussly had the world in honde*. This was Jean de Clermont, lord of Chantilly, maréchal of France, who was slain in the battle of Poitiers.

p. 32, l. 31, *Bursygaunt*.—*Bouciquaut* in the original. The person here alluded to was the father of the famous Jean de Maingre de Boucicaut, maréchal of France and governor of Gennes; he was sent on an embassy to the Duke of Burgundy by Charles V, and died at Dijon in 1367.

p. 34, l. 16, *a man that was acused*.—The anecdote here related is the same which is told elsewhere of Jean de Meung, one of the authors of the celebrated Roman de la Rose. See the life of the author in Méon's edition of that celebrated poem.

p. 36, l. 6, *betwene suche a lorde and me*.—The original is, *l'en parle moult de mal de moy et de mon seigneur de Craon*.

p. 36, l. 8, *notwithstondinge he and y hadd gret comunicacion diverse tymes, but it was never in no ueleni, nor in no euell thought nor in dede*.—The original of this is, *je ne dy mie qu'il ne couchast en mon lit, maiz ce fut sans villennie et sans mal y penser*. This is the reading of the best manuscripts; but one, of inferior authority, has, perhaps through a desire of the writer to diminish what we might consider the scandal of the lady's avowal, *je ne dis pas qu'il ne me touchat en mon lit*. In all cases, it is a singular illustration of the freedom of medieval manners.

p. 38, l. 26, *and ever lowly to her God*.—The translation is imperfect; in the original it is, *et fut dès lors en avant moult humble envers Dieu*, which Caxton translates, *and was ever after moche humble towarde God*.

p. 42, l. 7, *the parchemyn . . . was shorte*.—This was a very popular story. It is repeated in Mr. Furnivall's edition of Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne*, p. 287, and elsewhere.

p. 43, l. 5, *the person*.—*au chappelain* in the original, which is rather imperfectly translated here: *si avint la nuit ensuivant en avision au chappelain par .ij. foiz ou par troiz*.

p. 48, l. 18, *holdinge in her honde a cote and a smocke*.—The words of the original are *une cotte et une chemise*.

p. 51, l. 10, *And thanne, &c.*—This sentence should have been printed as follows: *And thanne she tolde the squier alle that had behapped her. Notwithstondinge he had hoped to haue turned her; but she was so afermed in goodnesse, that it wolde not be*.

p. 51, l. 24, *Our Lady of Beaulyon*.—In the original it is, *une eglise qui est en ma terre, et a nom Nostre-Dame de Beaulieu*. M. de Montaiglon has remarked that the place alluded to as being in the Knight's lands (which lay on the borders of Anjou and Britany) may have been either Beaulieu in the neighbourhood of Loches or Beaulieu near Mans. Caxton read it very corruptly, *oure lady of Bealem*.

p. 51, l. 27, *Pers Leuard*.—In the original the name is *Perrot Lwart*. Caxton has, *Perrot Lenard*. It may be remarked that a similar miracle is related in several of the medieval religious legends; in one a Welsh king and his queen are the offenders. In Furnivall's edition of Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne*, p. 277, we have the story of a man and his wife who had fled for safety to a monastery, and been allowed by the abbot to take shelter for the night in a chamber adjoining the church, in which they committed a similar offence, and, as it was too near the sacred edifice, they were punished by a similar miracle. Robert of Brunne dwells at length on the greatness of this offence in a manner that would lead us to suppose that it was not uncommon.

p. 51, l. 27, *sergeant of Candee*.—The French text, as edited by M. de Montaignon, has *sergent de Candee en la mer*, but he informs us that one of the MSS. omits the words *en la mer*, and another reads, *sergent de garde en l'année*.

p. 52, l. 14, *called Chimefere*.—The original has *une abbaye qui a nom Chievre Faye*. It was the abbey of Chievrefaye in Poitou. The French text says that the church had been damaged through the wars; *dont l'esglise a esté empirée pour les guerres*.

p. 52, l. 16, *that hight Pigreet*.—In the different MSS. of the French original he is called *Pigière*, *Pigère*, and *Pigerée*. Caxton read the name *Pygrere*.

p. 52, l. 28, *of love of mariage*.—M. de Montaignon has remarked in a note here, by way of explaining this sentiment, that, since the times of the barbarians, the church usually served as a place of refuge in time of war; and as people under such circumstances lived in it as in a house, the ecclesiastical authorities had granted to married people a permission to do that which would not have been prevented by its refusal.

p. 53, l. 7, *thei that see the good, &c.*—In the original this is given as a popular saying in rhyme,—

Qui le bien voit et le mal prent,  
A bon droit puis s'en repent.

p. 58, l. 29, *For the whiche folys dede*.—The original has, *Si avons cy grant exemple comment par le trespasement d'une petite pomme soyent devenus tant de douleurs et de maux*.

p. 60, l. 29, *For y know a man*.—In the French original it is, *Dont je congneux un baron*.

p. 61, l. 34, *that in shryfte excusithe hem and polysshithe her synne*.—This duty imposed upon the female sex, to describe their sins and vices fully and minutely, is continually insisted upon by the ecclesiastical writers, and was no doubt one of the most objectionable parts of the popish system of confession, and led to endless disorders. In the original it is, *si se excusent en leur confession devant leur prestre, et pollicent leur meffait, c'est-à-dire qu'ilz ne dient pas leurs pechiés si vilment comme ilz ont meffait, et en ont honte de le dire; mais ilz n'avoient pas honte de le faire*.

p. 62, l. 11, *tempered her and made her erce*.—This appears to have been miswritten by the English scribe. In the original it is, *la fist pechier et errer*.

p. 63, l. 2, *that were so horned*.—In the French, *et estoient bien branchues et avoient grans cornes*. Caxton translates it, *the remenaunt of their heedes was lyke two hornes*. An allusion to the head-dresses of the ladies, which at this time were made in the form of two long

pointed horns standing out one from each side of the head, and were a fertile subject of derision to contemporary satirists.

p. 63, l. 4, and *shewed her breches*.—In the original, this is explained much more fully and plainly: *Il dist que les femmes qui estoient ainsy cornues et branchues ressembloit les limas cornus et les licornes* (sometimes the head-dress was formed of one horn projecting forward), *et que elles faisoient les cornes aux hommes cours vestus, qui monstroient leurs culz et leurs brayes et ce qui leur boce devant, c'est leur vergoigne, et que ainsi se mocquoient et bourdoient l'un de l'autre, c'est le court vestu de la cornue*. This will be best explained by comparing it with Chaucer's satirical description of contemporary costume in the *Persones Tale*.

p. 64, l. 1, *fouled al her clothes and array*.—This story forms the sixteenth in the *Latin Disciplina Clericalis* of Peter Alfonsi, and also in *The Castoiment* in French verse, printed in Barbazan, vol. ii. p. 125.

p. 64, l. 24, *there was onis a gentille woman*.—This part of the Knight's book, which forms chapter xlix. of the original, is very much abridged, and, in fact, a great part of it omitted, in our translation. It was not the bishop who told this story of the "gentille woman" in his preaching, but a lady of the acquaintance of the Knight of La Tour-Landry, who, as an eye-witness, told it to him as having happened on the feast of St. Margaret (July 20) in the same year in which he entered it in his book, which he says was A.D. 1372, so that he had already spent more than a year in its compilation. *Dont je vous en diray une merueille que une bonne dame me compta en cest an, qui est l'an mil trois cens lxxij*. Caxton translates this account of the strange head-dress as follows:—*For her clothyng and araye was different and no thyng lyke to theyr, and therfore she had wel her part beholdyng and lokyng. Thenne said the good ladyes to her, "My frende, telle ye us, yf it please yow, how ye name that aray that ye have on youre heed?" She answerde and saide, "The galhows aray." "God blesse us," said the good lady, "the name of hit is not faire." . . . As ferre as I me remembre of it, hit was highe culewed with longe pynnes of sylver uppon her hede, after the makyng and maner of a gybet or galhows, right straunge and merveyllous to se*.

p. 67, l. 7, *a gowne of .iiij.<sup>xx</sup>. or .v.<sup>xx</sup>. scutis*.—The original has, *qui ont bien le cuer à faire acheter une robe de lx. ou de .iiii.<sup>xx</sup>. francs; mais elles tendroient à grant chose se elles avoient donné pour Dieu un seul franc ou une cote d'un franc à un poivre homme*. Caxton has, *And yet many one is in this world that wel have the courage so prowde, that wel they dare bye gownes of thre or foure score crownes, and yet thynkyng hit of lytel prys, that yf so were they must gyve to poure folke two or thre shyllinges they shold holde that overmoche*. In what follows, the original is again abridged in the translation.

p. 69, l. 13, *tolde me of a lady*.—The original is, *Je vy une baronesse bien grant dame, laquelle l'en disoit qu'elle se fardoit*. Caxton translates it more literally, *I sawe a baronesse, ryght a hyghe and noble lady of hygnage, the whiche as men saide blanked and popped or peynted her self*.

p. 69, l. 19, *more thanne .iiij. gownes*.—In the original, *plus de lx. paires de robes*.

p. 70, l. 6. *Rochmadame*.—In the original it is, *Nostre Dame de Rochemadour*. This was a well-known place of pilgrimage near Cahors, famous in the middle ages for the miracles performed there.

p. 70, l. 28, *the citee of Venges*.—In the original this is given more fully and correctly, *et pour ce devint comme une pierre, tout aussy comme Saint Martin de Verto, quant il fist fondre la cité de Erbanges, qui estoit en l'eveschié de Nantes, &c.* The life of St. Martin de Verto is printed by Mabillon in the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*. The city of Herbanges is called in the Latin life of the saint Herbadilla.

p. 71, l. 32, *And so her brother*.—It should be *brothers*; in the original, *et les freres d'elle*.

p. 71, l. 35, *and made her ete hem*.—These words are not in the original, nor are they in Caxton, but they appear to have been added by our translator.

p. 79, l. 6, *a ropers wiff*.—This story, or one closely resembling it, forms the subject of one of the medieval fabliaux, or stories, but I cannot at present refer to it.

p. 80, l. 16, *the prioures breke*.—This was a popular medieval story, and is found with various modifications. It was the subject of a fabliaux published under the title of *Les Braies au Cordelier*, in *Barbazan*, vol. iii. p. 169, and analyzed by *Le Grand d'Aussy*, *Fabliaux et Contes*, vol. i. p. 343, where other sources of the story are pointed out.

p. 82, l. 17, *the potte*.—This well-known old proverb is given in one of its French forms in the original text, *Et pour ce est bien dit, que tant va la cruche à l'eau que le cul y demeure*. See *Le Roux de Lincy*, *Livre des Proverbes Français*, tom. i. p. 44.

p. 83, l. 6, *seint Katerine, seint Margarete, seint Luce*.—The original adds, after St. Margaret, *de sainte Cristine*, for which one of the French MSS. has *sainte Justine*. Caxton also has, *of saynte Crystyn*.

p. 84, l. 21, *the gret kinge Heroudes wyff*.—This, like some further statements about Herod in a subsequent chapter, was taken from one of the old legendary histories of Herod.

p. 86, l. 22, *so pore and presumptuous*.—The word *pore* must of course be a mere error of the scribe for *proud*; the original has, *et fust fier et presumpcieux*.



p. 88, l. 23, *the king Ataz, and about .lv. children.*—Read *.lx.*; and the French text has *Acas*.

p. 90, l. 2, *named Brun.*—The French text gives the name more properly, *Breneheust*.

p. 90, l. 2. *Sibille.*—The original gives the pretended prophecy of the Sibyl as follows: *Ce fust la femme dont Seville parla en prophetisant et dist, "Brune vendra de vers Espagne ou royaume de Gaule, c'est France, qui fera merveilles de cruaultez, et puis sera detraicte."*

p. 91, l. 2, *called Arthana.*—*Archaria* in the original, which reads *Phenomia* for the *Phanona* of our translation, and *Anna* for *Ama*. In Caxton the names are *Helchana*, *Fenenna*, and *Anna*.

p. 92, l. 2, *wiff to Sampson forte.*—i.e. Sampson the strong. The original is, *Samson fortin*.

p. 93, l. 2, *sorughe couetise.*—For *thorughe*; perhaps a mere error of the scribe. The original is, *par convoitise d'argent*.

p. 95, l. 18, *a gret lorde of Grece.*—The original makes no mention of Greece.

p. 96, l. 4, *the trouthe.*—Our translator has here omitted two anecdotes given by the Knight of La Tour-Landry, which read as follows in Caxton's version.

They be lyke to the joulours, whiche wylle make of a cole seme and shewe a fayr thyng; for they preyse a thyng before the folk, and behynde them they blame hit; wherfor one ought not to byleue that what they sayen. For they retche not what they say, but that they may please yow and to have youre love. And yf ye be wyse, ye ought to knowe them better than they shalle you, and put them fro yow, and take suche one that shall telle yow the trouthe and your wele. Suche flaterers deceyve the ryche men, as dyd a flaterer to a woman that sold cheses, whiche was fowle of vysage, and he made her to understonde that she was fayr and praty, and the woman was so folyssh that she wende he had sayd trouthe. Somtyme she gaf hym a chese, and, as he hadde it and was behynd her bak, he mocked her of it. I wold ye wyst thexample whiche I sawe in the toun of Angolosme, as the duk of Normandy cam before Aguillon. Ther were knyghtes which, for to take their disporte, shotte at a marke. And whanne the duke cam into the parke where as they were for to playe and disporte hym, he demaunded of one of the knyghtes a bowe and an arowe for to shete. And soone after he had drawen his arowe, there were there by hym two or thre that sayd, "Certaynly my lord shoteth wel." "Holy Mary!" sayd another, "how he draweth ryght of mesure!" "Ha, a!" sayd the other, "I wold not be armed, and that he had hit me." And thus they began to preyse hym; but for to seye trouthe, it was nothyng els but flaterieng, for he shotte the worst of al other. And therfor grete merveyll is how every flaterer

is agreable, and so moche pleaseth the lordes and the ladyes now in these dayes, and how they make them to byleve that they be stronger and more wyse than they be, and by theyre flaterieng make them to falle in grete surquedrye of them self.

p. 96, l. 22, *the tale of the squier*.—This appears to have been rather a favourite story in the middle ages. It is given in my “Selection of Latin Stories,” p. 104, from the *Promptuarium Exemplorum*, and it forms chapter cxxv. of the *Gesta Romanorum*, where the squire is made to void a black crow, instead of laying an egg. A rather different version of it will be found in the *Ménagier de Paris*, tom. i. p. 180. In more recent times it has been told in French verse by Lafontaine, *Fables*, liv. viii. fab. 6, and in English verse by John Byrom, *Poems*, vol. i. p. 31, who follows the version of the *Gesta Romanorum*. Our translator has only given the Knight of La Tour-Landry’s story imperfectly; for in the original the gossips raise the number of eggs not to five only, but to a hundred.

p. 105, ll. 1, 3, *Johne*.—This word has been erroneously printed, it should be *Johan*. The mark of contraction is properly across the *h*, and indicates a letter following it, representing its derivation from the Latin *Johannes*, like the French *Jehan*. When the name was intended to be represented in one syllable in old English, it was written *Jon*.

p. 109, l. 17, *a noble lady that was quene of Hungri*.—St. Elizabeth. In the original it is, *comme faisoit sainte Elizabel, qui fut fille au roy de Hongrie et femme à Londegume*. This last word is a mere corruption of *landegrave*; her husband was Louis IV, landgrave of Thuringia.

p. 110, l. 13, *the quene of Cipre*.—M. de Mas Latrie, in his *Histoire de l’Île de Chypre sous le Règne des Princes de la Maison de Lusignan*, tom. ii. p. 132, considers this queen to have been Constance of Aragon, wife of Henri II of Lusignan, and fixes the date of this anecdote at about the year 1324.

p. 114, l. 1, *seint Aragon*.—In the original it is *sainte Arragonde*, but it should be St. Radegonde. Caxton has, *saynt Arragone*.

p. 116, l. 1, *ther was an hermite*.—This was a popular story in the middle ages, and was repeated in many different forms. See Mcon’s *Fabliaux*, vol. ii. p. 173. A hermit, who had fallen under the obligation of committing one of the three sins, drunkenness or murder or adultery, chose drunkenness as the least. Having made himself drunk at the house of one of the peasantry, the man’s wife accompanied him home to assist him; on the way he yielded to temptation and committed adultery, and the husband arriving at the critical moment, the hermit, in fear of his vengeance, snatched up an axe and slew him. Thus he committed all the three crimes instead of one only.

p. 126, l. 32, *an ensauple of an emperoure*.—In the original it is,

*l'exemple de l'empereur de Constantinoble.* In the original text, too, we have *ses ij. filz*, not, as here translated, his two daughters. Caxton also has, *his two daughters*, and calls him *themperour of Constantynople*.

p. 129, l. 2, *that was a gret lorde in Babylone*.—The translator has here singularly misunderstood his original, which reads, *qui estoit grant seigneur en la chetivoison de Babilonie*, who was a great lord in the captivity of Babilon. Caxton's translation is, *whiche was a grete lord in the captyvyte of Babylone*.

p. 134, l. 26, *her suster the Magdalene*.—The original has merely, *sa suer Marie*. The translator is in error; yet Caxton also translates it, *the suster of Mary Magdalene*.

p. 136, l. 25, *countesse of Anjou*.—This was Emma wife of William duke of Aquitaine and count of Poitiers, who founded the abbey of Bourgueil in the year 990.

p. 140, l. 24, *a gowne*.—It must be borne in mind that at this time gowns and some other articles of dress were very costly things, and were preserved and in use for many years.

p. 142, l. 15, *an apple*.—This incident of the poisoned apples forms a part of other medieval stories, as, for example, that of Parise la Duchesse, in which the conspirators against the life of the duchess send her a present of poisoned apples, one of which is eaten by the duke's favourite nephew and causes his death, and she is accused of the murder and condemned to be burnt.

p. 142, l. 25, *offende*.—An evident error of the scribe for *deffende*.

p. 151, l. 12, *And after this*.—The editor of the French text has remarked here that the Knight has fallen into a singular error in placing the marriage at Cana earlier in date than the scene of Christ's disputation with the doctors.

p. 152, l. 30, *vnto his hous*.—So it is in the MS., but an evident error for *her*.

p. 154, l. 2, *the noble princesse Johanne*.—This was Jeanne, daughter of Louis count of Evreux, and third wife of Charles IV, or le Bel, king of France. She was married in 1325, and, left a widow in 1328, passed the rest of her life, till her death in 1370, in the most exemplary piety: the Knight speaks of her as *morte n'a gaires*, not long dead.

p. 154, l. 7, *the duchesse et cetera*.—In the original it is, *la duchesse d'Orléans*. This is believed to refer to Blanche, daughter of Charles le Bel and of the queen Jeanne just mentioned, who was married, on the 18th of January, 1344, to Philippe duke of Orléans.

p. 154, l. 11, *how that nobly she governed her selff and used holy lyff*.—The translator, who seems to have taken comparatively little interest in the examples selected from modern history, has here abridged

his original, which reads, *comment elle s'est noblement gouvernée en sa vefveté et nourri ses enfans et sa terre bien gouverné et usé de bonne vie.*

p. 154, l. 19, *And this good lady.—Et la vous desclaireray: c'est madame d'Artus.* French original. Caxton gives this chapter as follows:—

*Of the quene Johane of Fraunce. Capitulo xvj.*

The good quene Jane of Fraunce, whiche of late passed out of this world, and the whiche was wyse, of holy lyf, and moche charytable, and also ful of devocion, held her estate so clenly and so noble by so good ordenaunce, that grete thyng were to reherce it. After, by her schal we set the duchesse of Orliance, which in her lyf suffred moche, but she kept her ever clenly and holily, but to long it were to recounthe of her good lyf and good condycions. Also we may not forgete the good countesse of Roussyllon, the whiche, she beyng a wydowe, kepte and governed her self so clenely, and soo peasyble dyd nouryssh her children, the whiche also kepte good justyce and held her land and peple in pees. Also I wyll telle yow of a baronesse whiche duellyd in our countrey, the whiche was in wydowhede by the space of .xxxv. yere, and was yonge and fayr whanne her lord deyde, and of many one she was requyred; but she sayd in her secrete that for the love of her lord and of her children she shold never be wedded, and held her in her wydowhede clenly withoute ony reproche, wherof she ought to be preysed. And her name I shalle declare unto yow, it was my lady of Vertus.

p. 155, l. 4, *the wiff of a knight.*—This is wrongly translated; the original is, *femme d'un simple bachelier.* Caxton translates it, *the wyf of a symple man.*

p. 156, l. 28, *as the nightyngales.*—In the original, this comparison is brought in as the sequel of an example from contemporary history, which our translator has omitted: *Dont je scay bien un exemple d'un simple chevalier qui espousa une grant dame, mais, toutes les fois que messire de Dorval le veoit, le premier salut que il lui fist si estoit lui subler, et puis lui dit que il ressemble au rossignol; car, quant le rossignol a jouy de ses amours, il suble. Sy vous dy bien que le chevalier n'est mie liés de la bourde, quelque chière que il en faist.* There is mention in contemporary records of a knight of Poitou of this time named the Sire de Derval, who was no doubt the individual here alluded to.

p. 158, l. 19, *Sir Raoul de Luge and Sir Piere de Luge.*—In the original it is, *Messire Raoul de Lugre et l'autre Messire Gieffroy.* These names appear to be unknown in history. One of the French MSS. reads *Lugne*, while another has *Luge*, as in the English. Caxton gives the name as *Lyege*.

p. 158, l. 22, *as Charmylour, Cicault, or Sarmitre.*—The original has *comme Charny, Bouciquaut, ou Saintre*, of which the names in

the English translation are mere corruptions. Geoffroy de Charny, lord of Lirey, figured in the wars of the middle of this century, and fell at the battle of Poitiers. The other names are well known.

p. 161, l. 35, *such as be worthi and blame*.—In the original there follows here another anecdote of Geoffroy de Lugre, which our translator has thought proper to omit. *Et vous diray encores plus, comme j'ay ouy compter à plusieurs chevaliers qui virent cellui messire Gieffroy de Lugre et autres, que, se il chevauchast par le pays, il demandast : "A qui est cellui herbergement là ?" et l'en lui deïst : "Cest à telle ;" se la dame feust blasmée de son honneur, il se torsist avant d'un quart de lieue que il ne vensist devant la porte, et luy feïst un pet, et puis pransist un poy de croye qu'il portoit en son saichet, et escriüst en la porte ou en l'uis : "Un pet, un pet," et y faisoit un signet, et s'en vensist. Et aussi, au contraire, se il passast devant l'ostel à dame ou damoiselle de bonne renommée, se il n'eust moult grant haste, il la vensist veoir et huchast : "Ma bonne amye, ou bonne dame, ou damoy-selle, je prie à Dieu que en cest bien et ceste honneur il vous vueille maintenir en nombre des bonnes ; car bien devez estre louée et honnourée." Et par celle voye les bonnes se craingnoient et se tenoient plus fermes et plus closes de ne faire chose dont elles peussent perdre leur honneur et leur estat. Sy vouldroye que cellui temps fust revenu, &c.* This paragraph is translated as follows by Caxton :—

*I have herd reherced of many knyghtes whiche saw and knewe the sayd syre Geffroy de Lyege, how that as he rode through the country, and as he aspyed and save some place or manoyr, he demaunded and asked the place, and yf he understode by ony maner that the lady of the manoyr or place were blamed of her honour and worship, he shold have gone oute of his ryght way, rather than he had not gone to the yate of the same place, and make there a paytte, and put and sette his signes ageynst the yate, and thenne rode ageyne into his ryght way. And contrary to this dede, yf hit happed to hym to passe before the place of a good and renommed lady or damoysselle, al had he never so grete haste, he wente to see her, and sayd to her, "My good frende," other "my lady," or els "damoyssell," "I praye to God that in this welthe and honoure he wylle hold and mayntene yow into the nombre of the good wymmen, for wel ye oughte to be preysed and worshipped." And thus, by this maner and way, the good wymmen drad and held them more sure fro doynge ony thyng wherby they myght lese theyr worship and honoure. Wherfore I wold that tyme were come ageyne. For as I wene, many one shold not be blamed and diffamed as they be now.*

Messire Geoffroy de Lugre must have been a rather singular individual.

p. 162, l. 13, *in Prouince, in Spaine, in Aragone*.—In the original it is, *en Rommenie, en Espagne, en Arragon*.

p. 162, l. 14, *In sum places, &c.*—The original enumerates the punishments as follows: *En aucuns lieux l'en leur coupe les gorges, en autres lieux l'en les murtrist à touaillons, en autres lieux l'en les emmure.* Caxton translates it, *In somme places men kytte of theire throttes, and in somme they be heded before the peple, and in other places they be mewred or put bytwene two walles.*

p. 167, l. 18, *syre Foucques de Laual.*—Foulques de Laval was the son of Guy de Montmorency Laval, the husband of Jeanne Chabot, lady of Rais, and was the head of the branch of Laval-Rais. He died in 1360.

p. 169, l. 4, *of the Galoys and Galoyses.*—Whence the Knight derived this strange story it would not be easy to guess. In old French, *galloise* meant a woman who lived licentiously.

p. 171, l. 22, *and of your moder.*—She was Jeanne de Rougé, the first wife of the Knight of La Tour-Landry. She was still alive at this time, for she did not die before 1383.

p. 177, l. 23, *Ye prayd her of loue, &c.*—Caxton has translated this passage imperfectly, or perhaps some words have been omitted by his printers. The original is, *Et les responses ne furent par trop sauvaiges, mais assez courtoises et bien legierettes, et, pour le grant semblant qu'elle vous fist, vous vous retraystes de la demander, et se elle se fust tenue un peu plus couverte et plus simplement, vous l'eussies prise.*

p. 182, l. 19, *The lady of Coussy.*—The adventures of the dame de Coucy and those of the Chastelaine de Vergy *qui morut por loialment amer son ami*, are well-known stories, but what story is referred to by *the duchesse* seems very uncertain. The Chastelaine de Vergy will be found in Barbazan's *Fabliaux*, vol. iv. p. 296, and in *Le Grand d'Aussy*, vol. iv. p. 98.

p. 183, l. 9, *playenge with me.*—In the original it is, *Dont il advint une fois que tout plain de chevaliers et de dames jouoient au Roy qui ne ment pour dire verité du nom s'amie.* Caxton appears not to have known an English name for the game, the nature of which is easily seen and understood. An account of it will be found in the *fabliau* of *Le Sentier Battu* in Barbazan, vol. i. p. 100.

p. 183, l. 32, *lyke the lady of the fucille.*—Caxton has here made a droll literal translation. The original is, *Vous ressemblez madame de La Jaille, qui m'a aussy dit.* M. de Montaiglon supposes this to have been Marguerite dame de La Jaille, the wife of Hardouin de la Porte, lord of Vezins in Anjou, one of whose children was married in July, 1388.

p. 185, l. 15, *And Sybylle sayth.*—The original, as edited by M. de Montaiglon, has, *Et la royne de Sabba dist*; but one of the French manuscripts reads, *la royne Sebille*, which was evidently the text Caxton had. Either is a curious authority on the subject.

p. 185, l. 33, *the duchesse of Bauyere*.—Bavaria, of course. In the French text it is, *J'ay ouy raconter d'une dame de Banière*, as M. de Montaignon prints it, for it may of course be read *Bauière*.

p. 185, l. 35, *she graf signe*.—A mere clerical error for *gaf*.

p. 186, l. 22, *the provost of Acquylee*.—This is a very well-known medieval story, which will be found in a metrical form in Méon's *Nouveau Recueil de Fabliaux*, tom. ii. p. 187.

p. 191, l. 30, *but such plate as they sawe abrode, that was a coupe and a piece only*.—This would appear to have been the ordinary amount of plate exhibited on the side-board of a single person who made no show. The original is, *fors sa vaisselle d'argent de chascun jour*.

p. 193, l. 1, *to be worshipped*.—Caxton has omitted the following rather interesting passage, which follows what represents of these words in the original text: *et là estoient les menestralx et plusieurs instrumens, à qui elle faisoit moult grant chières, et leur donnoit du sien largement, tant qu'ilz l'amoient à grant merveilles, tellement que, quand elle fut morte, ilz en firent une chanson de regret d'elle, où il y a au refrain:*

*Helas! à la Galonnière  
N'avons nous plus bel aler,  
Comme endroit ma dame chière,  
Qui tant nous souloit amer.*

*Et ainsi la regretoient. Et après ce elle avoit telle coustume, &c.*

p. 194, l. 3, *my lady Cecyle of Ballaunlle*.—In the original it is, *ent nom madame Olive de Belle Ville*. One of the French MSS. reads *Aline*. There was a family of lords of Belleville in Poitou; and M. de Montaignon thinks that the lady here alluded to may have belonged to the family of Jean de Harpedenne, lord of Belleville, whom Charles VII of France married to Marguerite, his illegitimate sister.

p. 195, l. 2, *had to name Cathonet*.—Cathon was the medieval form of the Roman name Cato, and Cathonet was the diminutive of it—little Cato. It is used here as the name of distinction between the son and the father. It is hardly necessary to say that Cato was a very celebrated individual during the middle ages, especially for his wise sayings, a reputation which arose from the popularity of the *Disticha de Moribus*.

This singularly curious story about Cato and his son appears to have been founded upon, or at least it is in substance identical with, a tale in the *Gesta Romanorum*, chap. 124. It is found slightly varied in the details in the *Dolopathos* of Herbers, and forms the first story in the well-known *Facécieuses Nuits* of Straparola. The name of Cato is only given to the hero in this form of the story under which it presents itself in the book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry.

p. 197, l. 16, *to be confyte in sugre and other spyces*.—In the original it is, *et le fis confire en bonne dragée*.

## GLOSSARY.

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| <p>             ABUSIONS, p. 175, deceptions.<br/>             Acorded, p. 33, agreed.<br/>             Amesure, p. 25, to measure.<br/>             Ameruailed, p. 139, astonished.<br/>             Amoderithe, p. 122, moderates,<br/>                 appeases.<br/>             Aorne, p. 39, to adorn.<br/>             Apaied, p. 35, satisfied.<br/>             Appertyse, p. 186, experienced.<br/>             Arrached, p. 197, tore.<br/>             Assautes, p. 157, attacks.<br/>             Assoiled, p. 41, absolved.<br/>             Attemperaunce, p. 131, conduct.<br/>             Attercope, p. 63, a spider.<br/>             Aualed, p. 113, let down.<br/>             Auaunced, p. 194, profited.<br/>             Auaylles, p. 196, profits.<br/>             Auctorytees, p. 194, authorities.<br/>             Auicion, } p. 48, a vision.<br/>             Auicyon, }<br/>             Auised, p. 128, advised.<br/>             Auision, p. 11, a vision.<br/>             Aunsetters, p. 4, ancestors.<br/>             Auowtry, p. 57, adultery.<br/>             Automd, p. 87, (?).<br/>             Auuter, p. 51, an altar.<br/>             Avoutri, p. 60, adultery.<br/>             Axsed, p. 85, asked.<br/><br/>             Balled, p. 22, bald.<br/>             Bariters, p. 53, baraters, quarrel-<br/>                 some people.<br/>             Behest, p. 57, promise.<br/>             Behight, p. 92, promised.<br/>             Berelle, p. 64, (?).<br/>             Bestailes, p. 103, cattle, pastoral<br/>                 wealth.         </p> | <p>             Bestis, p. 112, beasts.<br/>             Bestourned, p. 202, overthrown,<br/>                 turned upside-down.<br/>             Bewaked, p. 131, bewailed (?).<br/>             Bobant, p. 38, pride.<br/>             Bobaunce, p. 13, pride.<br/>             Borde, p. 40, jest.<br/>             Boted, p. 66, benefited.<br/>             Bounte, p. 106, bounty.<br/>             Bourde, p. 111, jest, joke.<br/>             Braydes, p. 54, brands.<br/>             Brenninge, p. 49, burning.<br/>             Brent, p. 49, burnt.<br/>             Bridde, p. 1, bird.<br/>             Brondes, p. 54, brands.<br/>             Broudjed, p. 168, embroidered.<br/>             Browesse, p. 8, pottage.<br/><br/>             Caste, p. 32, planned.<br/>             Chambreres, p. 30, wanton wo-<br/>                 men.<br/>             Chersinge, p. 119, cherishing.<br/>             Cheuance, p. 180, wealth, thrift.<br/>             Chiche, p. 136, niggardly.<br/>             Chyuetayne, p. 99, chieftain.<br/>             Cleped, p. 159, called.<br/>             Clergie, p. 117, learning.<br/>             Colle, p. 21, to embrace.<br/>             Comberous, p. 20, quarrelsome.<br/>             Coniured, p. 12, exhorted.<br/>             Conueyed, p. 100, confined.<br/>             Corage, p. 127, spirit.<br/>             Couerture, p. 110, covering.<br/>             Coup, p. 191, a cup.<br/>             Couroux, p. 85, ire.<br/>             Coynted, p. 168, dressed with<br/>                 finery.         </p> |
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Coyntely, p. 187, finely.  
 Coyntyse, p. 72, to dress with finery.  
 Crompithe, p. 71, becomes corrupt.  
 Cunne, p. 26, to acknowledge.  
 Cutte, p. 34, lot.

Defaute, p. 160, fault.  
 Defended, p. 57, forbidden.  
 Depuceld, p. 74, deflowered, deprived of her maidenhood.  
 Dethe, p. 106, death. A word or two appear to be wanting in the MS., as the original is, *que pour mourir elle ne deist ne feist chose*.

Detrenchid, p. 74, cut to pieces.  
 Deuocion, p. 137, devocion.  
 Digne, p. 5, worthy.  
 Dite, p. 69, arranged, prepared.  
 Diuerse, p. 104, contradictory.  
 Dizt, p. 19, prepared.  
 Drenche, p. 6, to drown.

Egaly, p. 180, equally.  
 Endoctrine, p. 190, doctrine.  
 Enfrayned, p. 203, transgressed.  
 Enharded, p. 56, encouraged.  
 Enis, p. 2, once.  
 Enoueltees, p. 30, novelties.  
 Enpeched, p. 204, prevented.  
 Enseynementes, p. 194, instructions.  
 Entremete, p. 184, to interfere, to meddle.  
 Esbatement, p. 172, amusement.  
 Eschauufe, p. 164, to heat, excite.  
 Esconduyed, p. 85, refused.  
 Ewelle, p. 54, evil.  
 Exhaunsithe, p. 91, enhanceth, exalteth.  
 Extraie, p. 3, to extract.

Faon, p. 106, a fawn.  
 Farded, p. 69, painted her face.  
 Fared, p. 69, painted.  
 Fawte, p. 200, fault.

Fayre, p. 69, to make handsome.  
 Ferde, p. 36, fear.  
 Ferforth, p. 173, so far.  
 Fermaylles, p. 186, brooches, clasps.  
 Fors, p. 33, no fors, is equivalent to, no matter.  
 Foysun, p. 62, abundance.  
 Fructifye, p. 7, to become fertile.  
 Fucille, p. 183, a spindle.

Garderobe, p. 111, a wardrobe.  
 Gardonithe, p. 4, rewardeth.  
 Geste, p. 3, } deeds, annals.  
 Gestis, p. 40, }  
 Gesyne, p. 109, child-birth.  
 Gises, p. 29, fashions.  
 Glomyng, p. 35, looking black, frowning.  
 Gourmaunde, p. 9, to eat gluttonously.  
 Guerdoned, p. 144, rewarded.  
 Guysey, p. 109, perhaps an error of the scribe for *gesyne*.  
 Gwerpysshe, p. 181, abandon, forsake.

Haultarie, p. 127, arrogant, haughty.  
 Hautyuete, p. 126, haughtiness.  
 Hedy, p. 40, heads.  
 Hem, p. 5, them.  
 Hennys, p. 50, hence.  
 Her, p. 1, their.  
 Herburghe, p. 124, lodging.  
 Heres, p. 27, ears.  
 Herkyn, p. 145, to hearken, to listen to.  
 Highed, p. 20, exalted.  
 Hight, p. 95, called.  
 Hougely, p. 139, hugely.

Iangeling, p. 32, prating, chattering.  
 Iangille, p. 32, to prate, to chatter.  
 Iape, p. 98, to mock.  
 Iaper, p. 33, a mocker.  
 Iaping, p. 9, mocking.

- Impetret, p. 14, obtains by intreaty.  
 Impetrithe, p. 51, obtaineth by intreaty.  
 Inconueniantis, p. 92, inconveniences, wrongs.  
 Iolytees, p. 41, pleasures.  
 Iurred, p. 145, trimmed, ornamented; *adournées*, in the original.  
 Iustinge, p. 34, jousts.  
 Iustyse, p. 171, justice.  
 Kemed, p. 45, combed.  
 Kiste, p. 9, cast.  
 Late, p. 70, let, permit.  
 Lemman, p. 10, paramour.  
 Lesinge, pp. 33, 176, a falsehood.  
 Leteres, p. 54, hinderers.  
 Lette, p. 44, to hinder.  
 Letuse, p. 65, fur.  
 Longed, p. 56, belonged.  
 Luste, p. 55, will.  
 Lycorous, p. 22, nice.  
 Lyge, p. 23, to lie.  
 Lykerous, p. 53, dainty.  
 Lymer, p. 15, a bloodhound.  
 Lytelyd, p. 61, extenuated.  
 Mareys, p. 63, a marsh.  
 Marguarite, p. 157, a pearl.  
 Maugre, p. 33, ill-will.  
 Mauuastye, p. 171, wickedness.  
 Meruaile, p. 160, wonder, marvel.  
 Meselle, p. 90, a leper.  
 Meselrye, p. 90, leprosy.  
 Meuble, p. 119, furniture, moveables.  
 Meuyd, p. 188, moved.  
 Mewred, p. 73, shut up within walls.  
 Mistornithe, p. 71, reverses, turns out of its course.  
 Morw, p. 51, morrow.  
 Mouse, p. 45, to muse, to think.  
 Mue, p. 85, a coop in which poultry was shut up to fatten; a prison.  
 Mued, p. 85, shut up in a coop.  
 Myschaunt, p. 126, naughty.  
 Mysprysed, p. 186, mistaken.  
 Nere, p. 18, nearer.  
 Next, p. 63, nearest.  
 Nille, p. 17, will not.  
 Not, p. 9, naught.  
 Noyus, p. 101, injurious.  
 Nys, p. 30, is not.  
 Occysiones, p. 115, slaughters.  
 Offerande, p. 150, the offering.  
 Oke, p. 8, to ache.  
 Onis, pp. 44, 116, once.  
 Orgueilleux, p. 84, haughty.  
 Orguylleus, p. 84, haughty.  
 Otour, p. 22, otter.  
 Ouches, p. 186, jewels, fibulae.  
 Ouertlwarteres, p. 53, contradictors.  
 Ouertlwarty, p. 28, contradictingly.  
 Oultrecuydance, p. 87, presumption.  
 Partable, p. 61, partaking.  
 Pere, p. 17, equal.  
 Perfit, p. 56, perfect.  
 Person, p. 43, parson.  
 Pete, p. 89, pity.  
 Pilled, p. 22, bald.  
 Pistelle, p. 106, an epistle.  
 Popped, p. 68, painted.  
 Poppinge, p. 68, painting.  
 Prime, pp. 9, 200, six o'clock in the morning, (the canonical hour.)  
 Priuely, p. 114, privily.  
 Propyce, p. 193, organized, trained.  
 Purfiled, p. 30, trimmed, embroidered.  
 Purseuaunt, p. 159, follower.  
 Puruaunce, p. 106, foresight.  
 Queint, p. 40, fine.  
 Queintise, p. 146, } fine attire.  
 Quentysses, p. 64, }  
 Queintly, p. 30, finely.

Ramageus, p. 14, wild, unruly.  
 Rampe, p. 25, an ill-conditioned woman.  
 Raught, p. 2, cared.  
 Rechithe, p. 24, careth.  
 Reconisaunce, p. 5, acknowledgment, thanks.  
 Recouere, p. 179, recover.  
 Rede, p. 14, to counsel, advise.  
 Reuest, p. 49, to clothe.  
 Ribible, p. 159, a two-stringed musical instrument played with a bow.  
 Rock, p. 79, distaff.  
 Roune, p. 40, to whisper.  
 Rownd, p. 27, whispered.  
  
 Sauf, p. 49, save, except.  
 Sauuement, p. 117, salvation.  
 Saweringe, p. 59, savouring.  
 Science, p. 4, knowledge.  
 Scomfit, p. 55, to defeat.  
 Score, p. 11, to scour.  
 Scoymous, p. 155, squeamish.  
 Sele, p. 27, salt.  
 Sely, p. 52, simple.  
 Seruithe, p. 164, serves.  
 Sethe, p. 13, afterwards.  
 Seyle, p. 27, to jump.  
 Shent, p. 25, spoilt.  
 Slee, p. 90, slay.  
 Sleuthe, p. 44, sloth.  
 Soroughe, p. 93, through. Evidently an error of the scribe for *thoroughe*.  
 Sorw, p. 103, sorrow.  
 Sothes, p. 124, verities.  
 Souerainly, p. 107, sovereignly.  
 Sourded, p. 100, arose.  
 Sparhauke, p. 14, sparrow-hawk.  
 Statis, p. 159, estates.  
 Stere, p. 37, stir.  
 Stered, p. 132, stirred.  
 Steuen, p. 6, a time fixed for performance of anything. *To set steuen* was a very common phrase.  
 Straunged, p. 58, estranged.  
 Stroied, p. 9, destroyed.

Suorien, p. 50, sworn.  
 Sus, p. 27, upon.  
 Swalle, p. 37, to swell.  
 Swalt, p. 47, swelled.  
 Sweiuies, p. 43, dreams.  
 Swyped, p. 169, swept.  
  
 Tached, p. 18, dispositioned.  
 Taches, p. 24, blemishes.  
 Taille, p. 89, taxes.  
 Techethe, p. 17, (?). The word which answers to this in the French text is *seure*.  
 Thridde, p. 56, third.  
 Thrustille, p. 1, a thrush.  
 Tierce, p. 200. The canonical hour beginning at nine o'clock A.M.  
 Tortu, p. 15, a tortoise.  
 Tromper, p. 33, a deceiver.  
 Trowen, p. 148, believe.  
 Twey, p. 153, two.  
  
 Vaillaunce, p. 157, esteem.  
 Ueleni, p. 36, wickedness.  
 Uelonis, p. 25, insolent.  
 Vergoyne, p. 175, shame, abashment.  
 Vergoynous, p. 190, abashed.  
 Verres, p. 27, glasses.  
 Uiage, p. 51, a voyage, journey.  
 Vnauised, p. 126, unadvised.  
 Unnethe, p. 9, hardly, with difficulty.  
 Uoys, p. 12, voice.  
 Uoyde, p. 52, to empty.  
  
 Waxinge, p. 49, increasing.  
 Wende, pp. 13, 33, thought.  
 Wenen, p. 57, think.  
 Wenying, p. 13, thinking.  
 Weringe, p. 49, protection.  
 Wode, p. 6, mad.  
 Woned, p. 20, lived.  
 Wote, p. 5, knows.  
 Wratthinge, p. 24, angering.  
 Wrayed, p. 62, betrayed.  
  
 Yede, p. 2, went.  
 Ysette, p. 1, settled.

## INDEX OF SUBJECTS.

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